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Biographia Classica: *K*

THE
L I V E S
AND
CHARACTERS
OF ALL THE
CLASSIC AUTHORS,
The GRECIAN and ROMAN Poets,
Historians, Orators, and Biographers.

WITH
An HISTORICAL and CRITICAL ACCOUNT
of Them and their Writings:

Illustrating their several EXCELLENCIES, and
shewing their DEFECTS, from the JUDGE-
MENT and REMARKS of the most Celebrated
CRITICS, both Ancient and Modern.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

L O N D O N:

Printed for D. BROWNE, at the *Black-Swan*,
without *Temple-Bar*. MDCCXL.

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Biographic Classica:
THE
LIVES
AND
CHARACTERS

MUSEUM
BRITAN
NICUM
The Great British Museum
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THE PREFACE.

THE Usefulness, or the Necessity rather, of a Work of this nature, (if it be executed with proper Judgment and Diligence) can never be disputed by such as profess any Regard for Classic Learning, or for those mighty and celebrated Names, who have been transmitted to us with Honour, thro' so many Ages, as the great and venerable Founders of it. The mere Reading and Grammatical Understanding of these Writers must be dry and unaffecting, without you are in some measure made acquainted with their Characters, their Lives, their Histories, their several Beauties and Imperfections, the Times in which they lived,

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the Figure they have made in the Republick of Letters, the Sentiments and Judgment of the Learned in all Ages upon their Works and Compositions. These, and many more Circumstances are so necessary to be known by a young Student, (who begins to tread upon Classic Ground) in order to conduct him with Pleasure and Advantage through the Course of his Studies, that without these Helps, he must walk with Doubt and Diffidence, must be led astray by false Lights, and be deprived of many wonderful and agreeable Discoveries, which a Collection of this sort must unavoidably hold out to him.

I would have it understood, that the following Volumes are chiefly design'd for the Use and Instruction of younger Scholars, tho' perhaps they may be of real Benefit to Gentlemen, who have for some Years neglected the Advantages of their Education, and have a mind to resume those pleasant and useful Studies, in which they formerly made a Progress at the Schools or Universities. Every thing contained in them is submitted with great Deference to the professed Masters in Classic Knowledge, who will find no greater Faults, than I hope may be atoned for by the Diligence they will see I have used in collecting proper Materials, and the Care I have taken to dispose them in a clear and

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useful Method. In short, I presume I have in this Design come pretty near to what the Title promises, and therefore shall not plead want of Time or Abilities, the mean and common Refuge of little Authors; since those must be sorry Excuses for a Man's Writing but indifferently, which are strong Reasons why he should not have written at all.

I am not aware of any notable Objection that can be offer'd against the Method I have observed in the Digesting of this Work, tho' it intirely differs from the Scheme that has been followed by those who have gone before me. The Lives of the Grecian Poets have been written many Years ago by a very learned Hand, and lately, (and at a great Distance indeed) have appear'd the Lives of the Roman Poets, attended with Remarks and Criticisms. But these Writers seem to have studied more to display their own Accomplishments, and the Quaintness of their own Skill, than to inform the young Student that wants help; they entertain you with their own Observations, and rest wholly upon them, without vouchsafing to call to their Aid the Judgment and Sense of the many Learned that went before them, and have acquired Immortality by their laborious Commentaries, and Disquisitions; they overpower you with pompous and long Quota-

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tions, that cover above half their Paper. Besides, their Thoughts lie loose and scattered, and unconnected, they are generally flat and tedious, and therefore trouble and perplex you in the Reading: This Fault I have endeavoured carefully to avoid; the Lives and principal Incidents that relate to these Classic Authors, you will find in a close and compact View, and the Opinion of the best Criticks upon their Writings follow after in a regular Order: With great Caution I offer any thing of my own Judgment, which I have the modesty to think would shew vain, forward, and perhaps impertinent among a Number of so great and undisputed Authorities.

THIS Work must be confessed to have another Advantage superiour to any thing that has been yet published, by the Addition of a whole Volume, containing the Lives and Characters of the Grecian and Roman Historians, and Biographers; which I am confident no Man will say, were ever yet collected together to any purpose in the English Language.

I believe I am the first that ever compiled a Work of this Nature, without a Multitude of Quotations; and since I did not see the Necessity of it, I was willing to avoid all Shew

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and Ostentation of Learning. I have indeed introduced the Translation of some few Latin and Greek Passages, which the judicious Reader will excuse, because he will see the Use of it. And when there is occasion, 'tis as much Conceit and Pedantry, superstitiously to avoid citing Greek or Latin, as it is to be pompous and profuse in those Citations when there is no occasion.





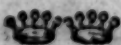
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THE
Lives and Characters

OF THE
CLASSIC AUTHORS, the GRECIAN
and ROMAN POETS, HISTORIANS,
ORATORS, and BIOGRAPHERS.

VOL. I.

HOMER.

IT has been the fruitless Labour of many Ages to arrive at any reasonable Certainty concerning the Circumstances of *Homer's* Life; every Man covets to know the Person he cannot but admire: but, unhappily, this is a Curiosity that can never in this case be thoroughly satisfied; the most celebrated of Men will for

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ever be the most unknown. Not but that the Ancients have writ his Life, but they are supported chiefly by fabulous Traditions, they run into Superstition, and are so different in their Relations, that no Dependance can be form'd from the Accounts which are given, particularly with respect to *Egypt* and *Greece*, the two native Countries of Fable.

WE have an Account in *Eustathius*, most strangely framed, which *Alexander Paphius* has reported concerning *Homer's* Birth and Infancy. That He was born in *Egypt* of *Damasagoras* and *Æthra*, and brought up by a Daughter of *Orus* the Priest of *Isis*, who was her self a Prophetess, and from whose Breasts Drops of Honey would frequently distill into the Mouth of the Infant. In the Night-time, the first Sounds he uttered, were the Notes of nine several Birds; in the Morning he was found playing with nine Doves in the Bed: The Sibyl who attended him was used to be seized with a Poetical Fury, and utter Verses, in which she commanded *Damasagoras* to build a Temple to the Muses. This he performed in obedience to her Inspiration, and related all these things to the Child when he was grown up; who in Memory of the Doves which played with him during his Infancy, has in his Works prefer'd this Bird to the Honour of bringing *Ambrosia* to *Jupiter*.

HELIODORUS, who had heard of this Claim which *Egypt* put in for *Homer*, endeavours to strengthen it by naming *Thebes* for the particular Place of his Birth. He allows too, that a Priest was his reputed Father, but that his real Father, according to the Opinion of *Egypt*, was *Mercury*. He says, that when the Priest

THAT Poetical Genealogy which is deliver'd for *Homer's* in the *Greek Treatise* of the Contention between him and *Hesiod*, gives this Account of his Descent. The Poet *Linus* was born of *Apollo*, and *Thaïse* the Daughter of *Neptune*; *Pierus* of *Linus*; *Oeagrus* of King *Pierus*, and the Nymph *Methone*; *Orpheus* of *Oeagrus*, and the Muse *Calliope*; from *Orpheus* came *Othrys*; from him *Harmonides*; from him *Philoterpus*; from him *Euphemus*; from him *Epiphrades*, who begot *Menalops* the Father of *Dius*; *Dius* had *Hesiod* the Poet, and *Perses* by *Pucamede* the Daughter of *Apollo*; then *Perses* had *Mæon*, on whose Daughter *Chrytheis*, the River *Meles* begot *Homer*. Here is a wonderful Genealogy, contrived industriously to raise our Idea to the highest; especially if we consider, that *Harmonides* is derived from *Harmony*, *Philoterpus* from *Love of Delight*, *Euphemus* from beautiful *Diction*, *Epiphrades* from *Intelligence*, and *Pucamede* from *Prudence*. It is not im-

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probable, but the Inventors meant by a Fiction of this Nature to turn such Qualifications into *Persons*, as were agreeable to his Character for whom the Line was drawn.

THERE is a short Life of *Homer* attributed to *Plutarch*, wherein a third Part of *Aristotle* on *Poetry*, which is now lost, is quoted, for an Account of his uncommon Birth in this manner: At the time when *Neleus* the Son of *Codrus* led the Colony which was sent into *Ionia*, there was in the Island of *Io*, a young Girl compressed by a *Genius* who delighted to associate with the *Muses* and share in their *Consorts*. She finding herself with Child, and being touched with the Shame of what had happened to her, removed from thence to a Place called *Egina*. There she was taken in an Excursion made by Robbers, and being brought to *Smyrna*, which was then under the *Lydians*, they gave her to *Mæon* the King, who married her upon the Account of her Beauty: But while she walked on the Bank of the River *Meles*, she brought forth *Homer*, and expired. The Infant was taken by *Mæon*, and bred up as his Son, till the Death of that Prince.

The most remarkable Tradition of *Homer's* Life is his Blindness, yet this must not befall him in a common manner; nothing less than Gods and Heroes must be visibly concerned about it. Thus we find among the different Accounts which *Hermias* has collected concerning his Blindness, that when *Homer* resolved to write of *Achilles*, he had an exceeding Desire to fill his Mind with a just Idea of so glorious a Hero; wherefore having paid all due Honours at his Tomb, he intreats that

He may obtain a Sight of him. The Hero grants his Poet's Petition, and rises in a glorious Suit of Armour, which cast so unsufferable a Splendor, that *Homer* lost his Eyes while he gazed for the Enlargement of his Notions.

BUT the most formal Account we have of the Life of *Homer* is that which is said to be collected by *Herodotus*. It is an unsupported low Treatise, composed of Events which lie only within the Compass of Probability and belong to the lowest Sphere of Life; it seems to be entirely conducted by the Spirit of a *Grammarians*, and is a mean Performance: I shall not therefore translate the whole Life ascribed to *Herodotus*, (for it is not universally received as Genuine) but only the most material Parts of it. We ought not to be nicer than *Strabo*, who did not disdain to make use of it.

A Man of *Magnesia*, whose Name was *Metasthenes*, went to settle at *Cuma*, where he married the Daughter of a Citizen called *Hymetes*, and had by her a Daughter called *Crithis*. The Father and Mother dying, that young Maid was left under the Tuition of *Gleomachus*, her Father's Friend. Whether the Guardian did not take care of his Ward, or that the loose Government which is usual in new Settlements, allowed a sort of Liberty contrary to good Manners, this young Maid suffered herself to be deluded, and proved with Child. The Guardian, who had not prevented the Misfortune, was willing to conceal it, and sent *Crithis* to *Smyna*, which was then building eighteen Years after the Founding of *Cuma*, that is, one hundred sixtyeight after the taking of *Troy*. *Crithis* being near her time, went one day

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day to a Festival which the Town of *Smyrna* was celebrating on the Banks of the River *Meles*. Her Pains came upon her, and she was delivered of *Homer*, whom she called *Melesigenes*, because he was born on the Banks of that River. Having nothing to maintain her, she was forced to spin for her Living.

THERE was at that time in *Smyrna*, a Man called *Phemius*, who taught Literature and Musick. This Man having often seen *Critheis*, who lodged near him, and being pleased with her Housewifery, took her to his House to spin the Wool he received from his Scholars for their Schooling. She behaved herself so modestly and discreetly, that *Phemius* married her, and adopted her Son, in whom he discovered a wonderful Genius, and the best natural Disposition in the World. After the Death of *Phemius* and *Critheis*, *Homer* succeeded to his Father-in-Law's Fortune and School, and was admired, not only by the Inhabitants of *Smyrna*, but by all Strangers, who resorted thither from all Parts, that being a Place of great Trade.

A Ship-Master called *Mentes*, who was a Man of Wit, very Learned, and a Lover of Poetry, was so taken with *Homer*, that he followed him close, and persuaded him to leave his School, and travel with him. *Homer*, whose Head was then upon his Poem of the *Iliad*, and thought it of great consequence to see the Places he should have occasion to treat of, embraced the Opportunity. He embark'd with *Mentes*, and during their several Voyages, never failed carefully to note down all that he thought worth observing: no Man was ever more exact than he in specifying the Situation of Places, the Temper and different

HE travelled into *Egypt*, from whence he brought into *Greece* the Names of the Gods, and the chief Ceremonies of their Worship. He visited *Africa* and *Spain*, in his return from whence he touch'd at *Ithaca*, where he was much troubled with a Rheum falling upon his Eyes. *Mentes* being in haste to take a Turn to *Leucadia* his native Country, left *Homer* well recommended with *Mentor*, one of the Chief Men of the Island of *Ithaca*, who took all possible care of him. There *Homer* was informed of many things relating to *Ulysses*, which he afterwards made use of in composing his *Odyssey*. *Mentes* returning to *Ithaca*, found *Homer* cured. They embarked together, and after much time spent in visiting the Coasts of *Peloponnesus*, and the Islands, they arrived at *Colophon*, where *Homer* was again troubled with the Defluxion upon his Eyes, which proved so violent, that he is said to have lost his Sight. This Misfortune made him resolve to return to *Smyrna*, where he finished his *Iliad*.

SOME time after, the ill Posture of his Affairs obliged him to go to *Cumæ*, where he hoped to have found more Relief. By the way he stayed at a Place called *The new Wall*, being a Colony from *Cumæ*. There he lodged in the House of an Armourer called *Tychius*, where he recited some Hymns he had made in honour of the Gods, and his Poem of *Amphiarauus's Expedition against Thebes*. The People admiring him, he was sustained for some time. *Herodotus* as-
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shews us, that in his time they still shewed the Place where *Homer* used to sit when he recited his Verses, and that the Place was then held in great Veneration.

Next he went to *Cumæ*, and passing through *Larissa*, he writ the Epitaph of *Midas*, King of *Phrygia*, then newly dead. At *Cumæ*, he was received with extraordinary Joy. Here his Poems were wonderfully admired; but when he proposed to eternize their Town, if they would allow him a Salary, he was answer'd, that *there would be no end of maintaining all the "Ounçoi, or Blind Men*, and hence he got the Name of *Homer*. From *Cumæ* he went to *Phocæa*, where he recited his Verses in the Assemblies: Here one *Thestorides*, a School-master, offered to maintain him, if he would suffer him to transcribe his Verses. This *Homer* complying with, through meer Necessity, the other had no sooner gotten them, but he removed to *Chios*; there the Poems gained him Wealth and Honour, while the Author himself hardly earned his Bread by repeating them. At last, some who came from *Chios*, told the People, that the same Verses were published there by a School-master; *Homer* resolved to find him out. Having therefore landed near that Place, he was received by one *Glaucus*, a Shepherd, (at whose door he was like to have been worried by Dogs) and carried by him to his Master at *Bolissus*, who admiring his Knowledge, entrusted him with the Education of his Children. Here his Praise began to spread, and *Thestorides*, who heard of his Neighbourhood, fled before him. He removed however some time afterward to *Chios*, where he set up a School of Poetry, gained a competent Fortune, married a Wife, and had two Daughters, one of which died

died young; and the other was married to his Patron at *Bolissus*: Here he composed his *Odyssey*, and inserted the Names of those to whom he had been most obliged, as *Mentes*, *Phemius*, *Mentor*; and resolving for *Athens*, he made honourable mention of that City, to prepare the *Athenians* for a kind Reception. But as he went, the Ship put in at *Samos*, where he continued the whole Winter, singing at the Houses of Great Men, with a Train of Boys after him. In Spring he went on board again, in order to prosecute his Journey to *Athens*; but landing by the way at *Ios*, he fell sick, died, and was buried on the Sea-Shore. Some say, he died for Grief, because he could not expound a silly Riddle, proposed to him by some Fishermen; but *Herodotus*, with good Reason, contradicts that ridiculous Tradition. There are some other scatter'd Stories about *Homer*; he was fined, says *Heracitus*, at *Athens* for a Madman; *Ælian* relates, that he portioned his Daughter with some of his Works for want of Money: but these Stories are too trifling to deserve much Credit.

HAD these Memoirs of *Herodotus* been true, they would have decided the Place of *Homer's* Birth; to which, nineteen Places, says *Strabus*, laid their Claim. To be satisfy'd of this, *Adrian* enquired of the Gods, as a Question not to be settled by Men; and *Apollon* (according to *Pliny*) raised a Spirit for his Information. There is a Prophecy of the Sibyls, that he should be born at *Salamis* in *Cyprus*; and the Oracle given to *Adrian* afterwards, says, that he was born in *Ibaca*. There are some Customs in his Works, that seem to fix his Nativity in *Babylonia*, or *Egypt*. A School was shewed for his at *Colophon*, and a

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Tomb at *Ios*. The *Athenians* made his Name free of their City. The *Smyrneans* built a Temple to him, cast Medals of him, and grew so possessed of his having been theirs, that it is said, they burnt *Zoilus* for affronting them in the Person of *Homer*. The *Chians* plead the ancient Authorities of *Simonides* and *Theocritus*, the first calling him *The Poet of Chios*, and the other *The Songster of Chios*; and which is more, *Homer* in the Hymn to *Apollo*, (which is acknowledged for his by *Thucydides*) bids the Muses answer, that it is *the Blind Man that lives at Chios*; the *Chians* likewise shew to this day an *Homereum*, or Temple of *Homer*, near *Bolissus*. It is impossible to determine in a Point of so much Uncertainty.

THE Search is equally fruitless, if we enquire after his Parents. *Ephorus* has made *Maon* to be his Father by a Niece, from whence he obtained the derivative Name of *Maonides*. His Mother (if we allow the Story of *Maon*) is called *Crytheis*; but we are lost again in Uncertainty, if we search farther; for *Suidas* has mentioned *Eumetis* or *Polycaste*, and *Pausanias* *Glymene* or *Themisto*. He seems to have been born considerably later than the Siege of *Troy*, for in his Invocation of the Muses to recount the Catalogue of the Ships, he says, *for we have only heard a Rumour, and know nothing particularly*. But not to enter into all that dry Dispute, the World is inclined to stand by the *Arundelian Marble*, which places him at the time when *Diognetus* ruled in *Athens*, a little before the *Olympiads* were established, about three hundred Years after the taking of *Troy*, and near a thousand Years before the *Christian Era*.

Tate

THE very Name of *Homer* has been disputed; he has been called *Melesigenes*, from the River where he was born. *Homer* has been reckoned an Ascetic Name, from some Accident of his Life: The *Certamen Homericum* calls him once *Auletes*, perhaps from his *Musical* Genius. *Lucian* is very pleasant upon this Subject; he feigns that he had talked over the Point with *Homer* in the Island of the *Blessed*; I asked him, says he, of what Country he was? a Question hard to be resolved with us: To which he answer'd, He could not certainly tell, because some had informed him that he was of *Chios*, some of *Smyrna*, and others of *Colophon*, but he took him for a *Babylonian*, and said he was called *Tigranes*, while he lived among his Countrymen, and *Homer* while he was a Hostage among the *Grecians*. Some, it seems, have found that *Ὀμῆρ* signifies a *Hostage*; and this Poet (according to *Proclus*) was deliver'd as such in a War between *Smyrna* and *Chios*. Others pretend, that he had the Name of *Homer*, because he was born blind; but if any, says *Paterculus*, believes that *Homer* was born blind, he is blind himself, and has lost his Senses. The *Chian* Medal of him (which is of great Antiquity) represents him with a Volume open, and reading intently. It is impossible he should have been born blind, whatever he might have been afterwards; for he must certainly have beheld the Creation, consider'd it with a long Attention, and enrich'd his Fancy by the most sensible Knowledge of those Ideas, which he makes the Reader see, while he but describes them. It could not be thought, that they who knew so little of the Life of *Homer*, could have a right Knowledge of

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of his Person, yet they had Statues of him, as of their Gods, whose Forms they had never seen. There are still to be found in the Cabinets of the Curious, Medals of *Homer* struck at *Chios*, at *Smyrna*, at *Amastris*; but none of those Honours having been done him till long after his Death, we have no Figure of *Homer* taken from the Original, they are all of them, only the Product of Fancy and Imagination; but though the ancient Portraits of him seem purely Notional, yet they agree in representing him with a short curl'd Beard, and with distinct Marks of Age upon his Forehead.

THE only incontestable Works which *Homer* has left behind him, are the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. The *Batrachomyomachia*, or Battle of the Frogs and Mice, has been disputed; but however, is allowed for his by many Authors. It is indeed a beautiful Piece of Raillery, and *Statius* reckons it like the *Culex* of *Virgil*, a Trial of his Force before his greater Performance. The Hymns have been doubted also, and attributed by the Scholiasts to *Gynæthus* the Rhapsodist; but neither *Thucydides*, *Lucian*, nor *Pausanias*, have scrupled to cite them as Genuine. We have the Authority of the two former, for that of *Apollo*, and of the last, for a Hymn to *Ceres*, of which he has given us a Fragment. That to *Mars* is objected against; and likewise that which is the first to *Minerva*. The Hymn to *Venus* has many of its Lines copied by *Virgil* in the Interview between *Aeneas* and the Goddess in the first *Æneid*. But whether these Hymns are *Homer's*, or not, they were always judged to be near as ancient, if not of the same Age with him. Many other Pieces are ascribed to him. Epigrams, the *Martiger*, the *Cecropes*, the Destruction of *Oechalia*, and

and several more, which if they were his, are now to be reputed a real Loss to the Learned World. Time in some things may have prevailed over *Homer* himself, and left only the Names of these Works, as Memorials, that such were in being; but while the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* remain, he seems like a Leader, who, though he may have failed in a Skirmish, has carried a Victory, for which he passes in Triumph through all future Ages.

WHEN *Homer* had composed his Poems, the People were so taken with them, that they were soon dispersed throughout *Ionia*. They were all in one Piece, and not at all divided into Books. But every one not being able to purchase them entire, they went about in separate Pieces, and each of those Pieces took its Name from the Contents, as *The Battle at the Ships*; *the Death of Dolon*; *the Valour of Agamemnon*; *the Patroclea*; *the Grot of Calypso*; *the Slaughter of the Wooers*, and the like; nor were these entitled Books, but *Rhapsodies*; from whence they who sung them about had the Title of *Rhapsodists*, so called from the *Boughs* of *Laurel* they used to carry in their Hands. These different Pieces afterwards occasioned the Divisions into Books, as it is at present, and was the Work of Grammarians, who lived long after: When that Division was first made, is not known, but the Ancients never quoted *Homer* by Books. After the Poems of *Homer* were divided into Books, some *Greek* Grammarian writ the Arguments to each Book, as they are at this day.

HOMER was not known intire in *Greece* before *Lycurgus*; that great Law-giver being in *Ionia*,

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Ionia, and there having found perfect Copies of the two Divine Poems, took the pains to transcribe them himself, and carried over that Treasure into *Greece*. This we may call the first Edition of *Homer*, that appeared in *Greece*, about a hundred and twenty Years before the Building of *Rome*. As *Lacedæmon* had the Honour of first publishing *Homer's* Works, that of their Regulation fell to the Share of *Athens*, in the time of *Solon*, who then made a Law for their recital. It was then that *Pisistratus*, the Tyrant of *Athens*, a Master of much Learning and Wit, and a very gallant Man, put together the confused Parts of *Homer*, according to the Regularity in which they are now handed down to us. He divided them into the different Works entitled the *Iliad*, and the *Odyssey*. He (that is, his Son *Hipparchus*, by his Order) digested each according to the Author's Design, and distinguished each again into twenty four Books, to which were afterwards prefixed the twenty four Letters.

THIS Edition of *Athens* was soon carried and sung abroad by one *Cynæthus* a learned Rhapsodist, and his Followers, who rehearsed these Poems in all the Cities of *Greece*, and in the Islands, and they were publickly read in the Schools; witness the Story of *Alcibiades*, who going into a Rhetorician's School, asked him to read to him some part of *Homer*; and the Rhetorician answering, he had nothing of that Poet's, *Alcibiades* gave him a Cuff of the Ear; as if it had been unlawful for any publick Professor to undertake the Instruction of Youth, without being himself acquainted with *Homer*.

BUT the Carelessness of the Transcribers, and the Presumption of the Rhapsodists, soon introduced

duced many Mistakes into the Copies of *Homer's* Works, which run the danger of being utterly defaced; had not the Care of Kings and Philosophers undertaken to purge the Errors, and to restore them, as near as possible, to their primitive Purity. *Alexander* the Great, who was so passionately fond of *Homer*, that he laid him every Night with his Sword under his Pillow; who called him his Magazine of War, and who would have the Casket of inestimable Value taken among the Spoils of *Darius*; put to no other use, but to preserve these Poems; to the end, said he, that the most perfect Production of Human Wit might be kept in the richest Casket in the World: this *Alexander* appointed learned Men to revise and correct him, and committed that revisal to two great Philosophers, *Callisthenes* and *Anaxarchus*, who followed him in his *Asiatick* Expedition; nor was he satisfied with being present in Person at that revisal, but transcribed the whole Work with his own hand, as they corrected it from the best Copies, and likewise consulted *Aristotle* upon that Ocasion. This Edition of *Alexander's*, so corrected, was called, *The Edition of the Casket*.

AFTER the Death of *Alexander*, *Zenodotus* of *Ephesus* revised it again under the first of the *Ptolemies*. Under *Ptolemy Philometor*, the famous *Aristarchus* published a new Edition; he carefully revised those of *Alexander* the Great and *Zenodotus*, and what other Copies he could gather. This Edition had so great a Reputation, that the Number of Copies increased extremely. It is likely this produced the Copies of *Marseilles* and *Sinope*; and from that Copy doubtless are come our Editions. We find in the Life of the Poet

Aratus

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Aratus, that he having finished a Copy of the *Odyssey*, was sent for by *Antiochus* King of *Syria*, and entertained by him while he finished one of the *Iliad*. But the World was not contented barely to have settled an Edition of *Homer's* Works, for many Translations came abroad whereby other Languages were enriched by an Infusion of his Spirit of Poetry. *Alian* tells us that even the *Indians* had them in their Tongue, and the *Persian* Kings sung them in theirs. *Persius* mentions a Version into *Latin* by *Labeo*, and in general the Passages and Imitations which are taken from him, are so numerous, that he may be said to have been translated by piece-meal into that and all other Languages.

HOMER, who had a Genius accomplish'd for Poetry, had the vastest, sublimest, and most universal Wit that ever was; it was by his Poems that all the Worthies of Antiquity were form'd, from hence the Law-makers took the first Platforms of the Laws they gave to Mankind; the Founders of Monarchies and Commonwealths from hence took the Model of their Politicks. Hence the Philosophers found the first Principles of Morality, which they taught the People. Hence Physicians have studied Diseases and their Cures; Astronomers have learn'd the knowledge of the Heavens, and Geometricians of the Earth; Kings and Princes have learn'd the Art to govern, and Captains to form a Battle, to encamp an Army, to besiege Towns, to fight and to gain Victories. Nothing is so surprising as the Descriptions of his Battles, which take up no less than half the *Iliad*, and are supplied with so vast a variety of Incidents, that no one bears a Likeness to another, such different kinds of Deaths,

Deaths, that no two Heroes are wounded in the same manner; and such a profusion of noble Ideas, that every Battle rises above the last in Greatness, Horror, and Confusion.

FROM this great Original, *Socrates*, *Plato*, *Aristotle* came to be Philosophers; *Sophocles* and *Euripides* took the haughty Air of the Theatre and Ideas of Tragedy; *Zeuxis*, *Apelles*, *Polygnotus*, became such excellent Painters; and *Alexander* the Great so valiant. *Homer* has been the first Founder of all Arts and Sciences, and the Pattern of the wise Men in all Ages. And as he has been in some manner the Author of Paganism, the Religion whereof he established by his Poems, one may say that never Prophet had so many Followers as he; yet notwithstanding this so universal Genius, this Wit capable of all things applied himself only to Poetry which he made his Business.

IT is no Romantick Commendation of *Homer* to say that no Man understood Persons and Things better than he; or had a deeper Insight into the Humours and Passions of Human Nature. He represents great Things with such Sublimity, and little ones with such Propriety, that he always makes the one admirable and the other pleasant. He is a perfect Master of all the lofty Graces of the figurative Style: *Strabo*, the excellent Geographer and Historian, assures us that *Homer* has described the Places and Countries of which he gives account with that Accuracy, that no Man can imagine who has not seen them, and no Man but must admire and be astonished that has. His Poems may justly be compared with that Shield of Divine Workmanship; so inimitably represented in the
eighteenth

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eighteenth Book of the *Iliad*; you have there exact Images of all the Actions of War and Employments of Peace, and are entertained with the delightful View of the Universe. *Homer* has all the Beauties of every Dialect and Style, scatter'd through his Writings; he is scarce inferior to any other Poet, in the Poets own Way and Excellency, but excels all others in Force and Comprehension of Genius, Elevation of Fancy, and immense Copiousness of Invention. Such a Sovereignty of Genius reigns all over his Works, that the Ancients esteemed and admired him as the great High Priest of Nature, who was admitted into her inmost Choir, and acquainted with her most solemn Mysteries. The learned *Grotius* amazed at the extent of his Wit, the greatness of his Knowledge, the profoundness of his Thoughts and Maxims, and the sublimity of his Comparisons, has given him a very great Elogium, for he has not struck to compare one of the greatest Prophets, I mean *Ezekiel*, with this noble Poet. He excelled, says he, in Wit and Elocution, insomuch that laying aside the Gift of Prophecy which is above Comparison, he may worthily be compared to *Homer*, for his sprightly Thoughts, noble Comparisons, mighty Knowledge in several things, particularly in Architecture.

He has wonderfully found the way to raise his Poetry by the force of Harmony, mixing them artificially together, and supporting them with well-sounding Particles, and with lofty or graceful Epithets which cover all that's disagreeable in them. This he has wonderfully performed above all in reckoning up the Ships at the end of the second Book. *Dionysius Halicarnassensis*

Halicarnassus has made this appear by transcribing the eight first Verses of that List as a Pattern of the rest; and shewing that all those Names of Places have in themselves neither Beauty nor Grace, but that *Homer* has found out the secret to make them very beautiful and lofty. We need read those Verses only in the Original, and shall be amazed at their Magnificence. *Homer's* Poetry is like Musick, which can bring under its Command, and reduce to Harmony the most disagreeable and unharmonious Sounds; all things submit to it, and concur to work the Effects it enjoins.

HE had likewise the Art, by mixing of harsh, coarse and common Terms with other more flowing and polite, to make a middle Composition between the austere and harsh, and the graceful or florid; and by that means he wonderfully mixes Art and Nature, Passion and Manners; as *Dionysius Halicarnassus* has well expressed it. Whatsoever Place we pitch upon in this Poet, says that excellent Critick, we shall find him perfectly diversified by these two sorts of Fluency and Harmony. This happy Composition has given *Homer* such Vigour and such Charms as no Man yet could ever come near; and what is wonderful, is, that no Part is labour'd or forced: All flows from its Spring, and there is every where such a pleasing Easiness, as if the whole Poem had been continually dictated to *Homer* by the Muses he invokes.

'Tis said that *Homer* matchless in his Art,
Stole Venus' Girdle to engage the Heart,
His Works indeed vast Treasures do unfold,
And whatsoe'er he touches turns to Gold.

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*All in his Hands new Beauty does acquire,
He always pleases, and can never tire.
A happy Warmth be every where may boast,
Nor is he in too long Digressions lost:
His Verses without Rule a Method find,
And of themselves appear in Order join'd.
All without Trouble answers his Intent,
Each Syllable is tending to the Event.
Let his Example your Endeavours raise,
To love his Writings is a kind of Praise.*

Boileau's Art of Poetry.

HOMER was certainly the Father of poetical Diction, he was the first who taught that Language of the Gods to Men. His Expression is like the Colouring of some great Masters which discovers it self to be laid on boldly and executed with rapidity. It is indeed the strongest and most glowing imaginable, and touch'd with the greatest Spirit. Aristotle had reason to say he was the only Poet who had taught our *Words*; there are in him more daring Figures and Metaphors than in any good Author whatever. An Arrow is impatient to be on the Wing, a Weapon thirsts to drink the Blood of an Enemy. Yet his Expression is never too big for the Sense, but justly great in proportion to it. 'Tis the Sentiment that swells and fills out the Diction, which rises with it and forms it self about it.

To throw his Language the more out of Prose, he seems to have affected the Compound Epithets. This was a sort of Composition peculiarly proper to Poetry, not only as it heighten'd the Diction, but as it assisted and filled the Numbers with greater Sound and Pomp, and likewise conduced in some measure to fill

up

up the Images. He was not satisfied with his Language as he found it settled in any one part of Greece, but search'd thro' its differing Dialects with this particular View, to beautify and perfect his Numbers. He consider'd these as they had a greater Mixture of Vowels and Consonants, and accordingly employ'd them as the Verse required either a greater Smoothness or Strength. What he most affected was the *Ionic*, which has a peculiar Sweetness from its never using Contractions, and from its Custom of resolving the Diphthongs into two Syllables; so as to make the Words open themselves with a more spreading and sonorous Fluency. With this he mingled the *Attic* Contractions, the broader *Doric*, and the feebler *Æolic*, which often rejects its *Asperate*, or takes off its *Accent*; and compleated this Variety by altering some Letters with the Licence of Poetry. Thus his Measures, instead of being Fetters to his Sense, were always in readiness to run along with the Warmth of his Rapture, and even to give a farther Representation of his Notions in the Correspondence of their Sounds to what they signified. Out of all these he has derived that Harmony which makes us confess that he had not only the richest Head, but the finest Ear in the World.

He had many of his Fictions, says *Gale*, from some real Scripture-Tradition which he gather'd up whilst he was in *Ægypt*, and which we may collect from his Style and the Affinity of many of his Expressions with the Scripture Language. It cannot be doubted (says Sir *Walter Raleigh*;) but that *Homer* had read over all the Books

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Books of *Moses*, as appears evidently from many places stolen from thence Word for Word.

HOMER, says Sir *William Temple*, was without doubt the most universal Genius that has been known in the World, and *Virgil* the most accomplish'd. To the *first* must be allowed the most fertile Invention, the richest Vein, the most general Knowledge, and the most lively Expressions. To the *last* the noblest Ideas, the justest Institution, the wisest Conduct and the choicest Elocution. To speak in the Painter's Terms, we find in the Works of *Homer* the most Spirit, Force and Life; in those of *Virgil*, the best Design, the truest Proportions, and the greatest Grace. The Colouring of both seems equal, and indeed in both is admirable. *Homer* had more Fire and Rapture, *Virgil* more Light and Sweetness; or at least the poetical Fire was more raging in the one, but clearer in the other; which makes the first more amazing, and the latter more agreeable. The Ore was richer in the one, but in the other more refined, and better allayed to make up excellent Work. Upon the whole, says *Temple*, I think it must be confessed that *Homer* was of the two, and perhaps of all others the vastest, the sublimest, and the most wonderful Genius; and that he has been generally so esteemed, there cannot be a greater Testimony given than what has been by some observed, that not only the greatest Masters have found the best and truest Principles of all their Sciences or Arts; but that the noblest Nations have derived from them the Original of their several Races, though it be hardly yet agreed whether his Story be true or Fiction. In short, these two immortal Poets must

must be allowed to have so much excelled in their Kinds, as to have exceeded all Comparison, to have even extinguished Emulation, and in a manner confined true Poetry, not only to their two Languages, but to their very Persons.

*Just as a Changeling seems below the rest
Of Men, or rather is a two-legg'd Beast;
So these Gigantick Souls amaz'd we find
As much above the rest of Human Kind.
Nature's whole Strength united! Endless Fame
And universal Shouts attend their Name.*

Mulgr. Essay on Poetry.

IT is almost incredible to what an height the Idea of Veneration the Ancients paid to *Homer* will arise. *Sparta* and *Macedon* consider'd him most in respect of his warlike Spirit; *Athens* and *Ægypt* with regard to his Poetry and Learning. His Works which from the beginning pass'd for excellent Poetry, grew to be History and Geography; they rose to be a Magazine of Sciences, and were exalted into a Scheme of Religion. From him the Poets drew their Inspirations, the Criticks their Rules, and the Philosophers a Defence of their Opinions. They instituted Games for him, dedicated Statues, erected Temples, as at *Smyrna*, *Chios* and *Alexandria*; and *Ælian* tells us, that when the *Argives* sacrificed with their Guests they used to invoke the Presence of *Apollo* and *Homer* together. *Ptolemy Philopater* rais'd a Temple to his Honour, erected a fair Image of him, and placed about the Image those Cities which contended for the place of his Birth. *Ælian* informs us further, that *Galaton* the Painter had drawn *Homer* vomiting, and the rest of

the

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the Poets licking it up, signifying that they derived all that they had from him. *Virgil* was used to say, it had been easier to have wrested *Hercules'* Club from him than to steal a Verse from *Homer* by way of Imitation. *Arcefilaus* the Philosopher never failed to read some Passage of this Poet Night and Morning, and always said when he took up his Book, *he was going to his Mistress*. His Poems not only diverted the Mind, but have in all Ages pleased the Eye; the ablest Painters, and the most celebrated Statuaries have drawn from thence the Arguments and Designs of their noblest Works; they have been the greatest Ornaments of Temples and Palaces. *Vitruvius* reckons the Fights of *Troy*, and the *Wandrings of Ulysses* among the Subjects usually painted in Galleries and Portico's. *Hiero* caused all the Fable of the *Iliad* to be represented on the flooring of his Ship in inlaid Work. *Francis the First*, says *Mrs. Dacier*, took from the *Odysses* the Ornaments of one of the Galleries at *Fontainbleau*. Antiquity always takes notice of certain Bowls or Cups, of great Value, which they call'd *Scyphos Homericos*, *Homer's Bowls*, because there were some Stories taken out of his Poems, or several of his Verses engraven on them. *Nero* was passionately fond of them, as *Suetonius* informs us. There would be no end of being particular upon this Subject.

HOMER with his wonderful Accomplishments, and his inimitable Excellencies, could not secure his Memory from Detraction and Envy. *Monsieur Perrault* affirms confidently, there never was any such Person in the World. He says that the two Poems, the *Iliad* and the *Odysses*, are nothing but a Collection of many little Pieces

by several Hands joined all together in a Body. The Siege of *Troy* being the general Subject of the Poets in the times when it is pretended he lived, there came out commonly twenty or thirty Poems on that Action every Year, and the Man that made the best Verses gained the Prize. At last there happened to be some sort of Men in the World, who took a fancy to join the best of these Pieces together, and accordingly putting them into some Order and Method, they formed the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. This is a bold Opinion, and deservedly exploded.

OTHERS will allow *Homer* to have written the several Parts that make up those two Poems; but he writ them, say they, without any View or Design; his Poems are loose independent Pieces, tacked together, and were originally no more than so many Songs and Ballads upon the Gods and Heroes, and the Siege of *Troy*. This Notion is ridiculous. It would be strange that *Aristotle* should form his Rules on *Homer's* Poems, and that *Virgil* should build his *Aeneid* upon the Model of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, and that *Horace* should propose *Homer* for the Standard of Epic Writing with this Testimony, that he never undertook any thing inconsiderately, nor ever made any foolish Attempts, if this celebrated Poet had not formed his Works upon a regular Scheme and Intention, and carried them on designedly with Regularity and Method from the beginning to the end.

SOME again attack him as a Plagiary, and charge him with collecting and publishing the Works of those who writ before him. *Diodorus Siculus* tells us, that there was one *Daphne* the Daughter of *Tiresias* who from her Inspirations

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obtained the Title of a *Sibyl*; she had a very extraordinary Genius, and being made Priestess at *Delphos*, wrote Oracles with wonderful Elegance, which *Homer* sought for and adorned his Poems with several of her Verses. *Ptolemæus Ephestio* relates, that there was before *Homer* a Woman of *Memphis* called *Phantasia*, who writ of the Wars of *Troy*, and the Wandrings of *Ulysses*. Now *Homer* arriving at *Memphis*, where she had laid up her Works, and getting acquainted with *Phanias*, whose Business it was to copy the sacred Writings, he obtained a sight of these, and followed entirely the Scheme she had drawn. But this is a wild Story, which speaks of an *Egyptian* Woman with a *Greek* Name, and who was never heard of but upon this account. *Clemens Alexandrinus* asserts, that he has taken several Verses, word for word, out of *Orpheus de extincto Baccho*. There are other malicious Relations to be met with, which deserve no Credit, and therefore shall not be mentioned.

THE Writings of *Homer* have been racked and tortured for Objections: His Narrations, says *Scaliger*, are tedious, his Thoughts and Notions are too effeminate and vulgar, they have so little of Sense or Force in them, that he says they would scarce affect his Scullion. His Epithets are cold, flat, childish and unseasonable; he is too full of Digressions and insipid Dialogues, he has invented filthy and abominable Stories concerning the Gods. His Representations of the Deities are gross, and the Manners of his Heroes vicious and imperfect. He talks coarsely of Pots and Caldrons, of Blood, Fat, Entrails. We find Princes feasting of Beasts

and roasting them : We hear *Ulysses* boasting of being the best Cook in the World, and challenging any Man to cut Meat, to serve Wine, or to make a Fire with him. And we see *Achilles* trying his Faculty at the same Employment. These and other Censures equally trifling are to be met with, which are easily answer'd by observing only that when we are reading *Homer*, we are reading the most ancient Author in the Heathen World. We are taking a view of Nature in her simple Dress, in opposition to the Luxury of succeeding Ages; we are stepping almost three thousand Years back into the remotest Antiquity, and entertaining our selves with a clear and surprising Vision of Things no where else to be found, the only authentick Picture of the ancient World.

It is certain, the divine *Plato* banished the Writings of *Homer* out of his Commonwealth, which some would fix as a Blemish upon the Poet's Reputation. The reason, says *Blackwall*, why *Plato* would not admit the Poems of *Homer* to be in the hands of the Subjects of that Government, was because he did not esteem ordinary Men capable Readers of them. They would be apt to pervert his Meaning, and have wrong Notions of God and Religion, by taking his bold and beautiful Allegories in a literal Sense. *Plato* frequently declares that he loves and admires him as the best, the most pleasant, and the divinest of all the Poets, and studiously imitates his figurative and mystical way of Writing. Tho' he forbade his Works to be read in Publick, yet he would never be without them in his Closet. Tho' the Philosopher pretends that for Reasons of State he must remove him out of his City, yet he declares he

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would treat him with all possible Respect while he staid, and dismiss him laden with Presents, and adorned with Garlands (as the Priests and Supplicants of their Gods used to be) by which Mark of Honour, wherever he came, Men might be warned, and induced to esteem his Person sacred, and receive him with due Veneration.

THE most memorable Enemy to the Merits of *Homer* was *Zoilus*, a snarling Critick, who frequented the Court of *Ptolemy Philadelphus* King of *Egypt*, a great Encourager of learned Men. This Fellow wrote ill-natured Notes upon the Writings of this Poet, but received no Encouragement from the *Egyptian* Prince. He soon became universally hated, and at length died miserably; some say he was stoned, others that he was burnt to Death, and others that he was crucified by *Ptolemy* for a Crime that deserved that Punishment.

HESIOD.



HESIOD.

THE Lives of few Persons are confounded with so many Uncertainties and fabulous Relations, as those of *Hesiod* and *Homer*; for which reason, what may possibly be true, is sometimes as much disputed as the romantic part of their Stories. The first has been more fortunate than the other, in furnishing us from his Writings, with some Circumstances of his Life and Family, as the Condition of his Father, the Place of his Birth, and the Extent of his Travels; and he has put it out of dispute, tho' he has not fixed the Period, that he was one of the earliest Writers of whom we have any Account.

HE tells us in the second Book of his *Works and Days*, that his Father was an Inhabitant of *Cuma*, in one of the *Æolian* Isles now called *Faio Nova*, about thirty six Miles North of *Smyrna*; from hence he removed to *Ascra*, a pitiful Village in *Bæotia* at the foot of Mount *Helicon*, which was doubtless the Place where *Hesiod* was born, and so frequently gives him the Name of *Ascræus*; tho' *Suidas*, *Fabricius*, and others say he was of *Cuma*. He seems himself, and not undesignedly, to have prevented any Mistake about his Country; he tells us positively in the same Book, he never was but once at Sea, and that in a Voyage from *Aulis*, a Sea-Port in *Bæotia*,

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Bæotia, to the Island *Eubæa*. This connected with the former Passage of his Father sailing from *Cuma* to *Bæotia*, will leave us no doubt concerning his Country. He thus addresses his Brother *Perfes* with the Account of their Father's first Seat, and his Remove.

Ὡςπερ ἐμός τε πατήρ, &c.

So our poor Father toil'd his Hours away,
Careful to live in the unhappy Day.
He, foolish *Perfes*, spent no Time in vain,
But fled Misfortunes thro' the watry Plain.
He from *Æolian Cuma* th' Ocean pass'd,
Here in his sable Bark arriv'd at last.
Not far from *Helicon* he fix'd his Race
In *Ascra's* Village; miserable Place!
How comfortless the Winter-Season there?
And chearless, *Ascra*, is thy Summer Air!
O *Perfes* may'st thou ne'er forget thy Sire,
But let thy Breast his good Example fire.

THE Names of his Father and Mother we must learn from some other Intelligence, and *Suidas* tells us they were *Dius* and *Pycimene*. Of what Quality his Father was, we are not very certain; that he was driven from *Cuma* to *Ascra* by Misfortunes, we have the Testimony of *Hesiod*. His Father seemed to have prospered better at *Ascra* than he did in his own Country; yet *Hesiod* could arrive at no higher Fortune than keeping of Sheep on the Top of Mount *Helicon*. Here the Muses met with him, and enter'd him into their Service.

Ἄϊός ποδ' Ὁλόδογ, &c.

E'er while as they the Shepherd Swain behold
Feeding beneath the sacred Mount his Fold,

With

With Love of charming Song his Breast they fir'd,
There me the heavenly Muses first inspir'd.
There when the Maids of Jove the Silence broke,
To Hesiod thus the Shepherd Swain they spoke.

Shepherds attend your Happiness, who place
In Gluttony alone the Swain's Disgrace;
Strict to your Duty in the Fields you keep,
There vigilant by Night to watch your Sheep;
Attend ye Swains on whom the Muses call
Regard the Honour not bestow'd on all:
'Tis ours to speak the Truth in Language plain,
Or give the face of Truth to what we feign.

So spoke the Maids of Jove, the sacred Nine,
And pluckt a Scepter from the Tree divine,
To me the Branch they gave, with look Serene
The Laurel Ensign never fading green:
I took the Gift with holy Raptures fir'd,
My Words flow sweeter, and my Soul's inspir'd.
Before my Eyes appear the various Scene,
Of all that is to come, and what has been:
Me have the Muses chose their Bard to grace,
To celebrate the blest & immortal Race.
To them the Honours of my Verse belong,
To them I first and last devote the Song.

THIS is no more than a poetical Piece of
Vanity, which Lucian ridicules in a whole Dia-
logue; Ovid seems to have the same Opinion of
it in the beginning of his *Art of Love*. To prove
that he intended to be sincere, and speak no-
thing but Truth, he says,

*Nec mihi sunt visæ Clio, Clusque Sorores,
Servant pecudes vallibus, Ascræ, tuis.*

Nor Clio, nor his Sisters have I seen,
As Hesiod saw them in the shady Green.

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VIRGIL had more respect for this Poet, to whom he was so much obliged, and whose Pat-
terh he propos'd to imitate in his Georgicks, and only turning the *Laurel Rod* into a Set of *Pastoral Reeds*, he takes occasion to pass the highest Compliment in the World upon *Hesiod*.

*Hos tibi dant Calamos, en accipe, Musæ,
Ascræo quos ante seni, quibus ille solebat
Cantando rigidas deducere Montibus Ornos.*

These Reeds the Muses to your Lips commend,
The same they lent their old *Ascræan* Friend;
By whom inspir'd, descending Trees they led
To mix in Chorus with the Flocks he fed.

UPON the Death of the Father, who left some Fortune behind him, the Estate ought to have been equally divided between the two Brothers *Hesiod* and *Perfes*, but upon the Division *Perfes* defrauded him by corrupting his Judges. He was so far from being provok'd to any Resentment by this Injustice, that he expressed a Concern for those poor mistaken Mortals, who placed their Happiness in Riches only, even at the Expence of their Virtue. He lets us know, that he was not only above Want, but capable of assisting his Brother in time of Need, which he often did after the ill Usage he had received from him.

THE last Passage he mentions relating to himself, is his Conquest in a poetical Contention, *Amphidamas* King of *Eubæa* had instituted funeral Games in honour of his own Memory, which his Sons afterwards saw performed; *Hesiod* here was a Competitor for the Prize in Poetry, a Tripod, which he won, and, as he tells us him-
self,

self, consecrated to the Muses. *Plutarch* in his Banquet of the *Seven Wise Men*, makes *Periander* give an Account of the poetical Contention at *Chalcis*, in which *Hesiod* and *Homer* are made Antagonists; the first was Conqueror, who received a Tripod for his Victory, which he dedicated to the Muses with this Inscription,

Ἡσιόδος Μῆσαις, &c.

This *Hesiod* vows to th' *Heliconian Nine*,
In *Chalcis* won from *Homer* the Divine.

GYRALDUS in his *Life of Hesiod*, informs us, that he and *Homer* sung in *Delos* to the Honour of *Apollo*.

Ἐν Δῷλω,

Homer and I in *Delos* sung our Lays,
There first we sung and to *Apollo's Praise*;
New was the Verse in which we then begun
In honour to the God *Latona's Son*.

WE are told that *Philip* of *Macedon* and his Son *Alexander* had a Dispute upon this Subject. The Prince declared in favour of *Homer*; his Father tells him the Prize had been given against him to *Hesiod*, and asks him whether he had never yet seen the Verses *Hesiod* inscrib'd upon the Tripod, and dedicated to the Muses on Mount *Helicon*? *Alexander* allows it, and says, that *Hesiod* might well get the better, when Kings were not the Judges, but ignorant Plowmen and Rusticks. The Remark of *Cleomenes* the *Spartan* bears some Resemblance to this, who observes that *Homer* was the Poet of

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the *Lacedæmonians*, and *Hesiod* of the *Ilotes* or the *Slaves*, because the first taught the Art of War, and the other the Art of Husbandry. The Authority of these Relations is questioned by learned Men, especially by such who will not allow these two great Poets to have been Contemporaries, but place *Hesiod* between thirty and forty Years the older of the two.

HESIOD having enter'd himself in the service of the *Muses* left off the Pastoral Life, and applied himself to the Study of Arts and Learning. In the latter part of his Life he removed to *Locris*, a Town near the same Distance from Mount *Parnassus*, as *Ascra* was from *Helicon*. *Gyraldus* and others tell us he left a Son and a Daughter, and that his Son was *Stesichorus* the Poet; but this wants better Confirmation than we have of it. It is agreed by all, that he lived to a very advanced Age.

THE Story of his Death as told by *Solon*, in *Plutarch's Banquet of the Seven Wise Men*, is very remarkable. The Man with whom *Hesiod* lived at *Locris*, a *Milesian* born, ravished a Maid in the same House. *Hesiod*, tho' intirely ignorant of the Fact, was maliciously accused as an Accomplice to her Brothers, who barbarously murder'd him with his Companion, whose Name was *Troilus*, and threwed their Bodies into the Sea. The Body of *Troilus* was cast on a Rock, which retains the Name of *Troilus* from that Accident. The Body of *Hesiod* was received by a Shoal of Dolphins as soon as it was thrown into the Water, and carried to the City of *Molicria*, near the Promontory *Rhion*; near which Place the *Locrians* then held a solemn Feast, the same which is at this Time celebrated with so much Pomp.

Pomp. When they saw a floating Carcass, they ran with Astonishment to the Shore, and finding it to be the Body of *Hesiod*, newly slain, they resolved, as they thought themselves oblig'd, to detect the Murderers of a Person they so much honoured. When they had found out the Wretches that committed the Murder, they plunged them alive into the Sea, and afterwards destroyed their Houses. The Remains of *Hesiod* were deposited in *Nemea*, and his Tomb is unknown to most Strangers; the reason of its being concealed was because of the *Orcbomenians*, who had a design, founded on the Advice of an Oracle, to steal his Remains from thence, and to bury them in their own Country. This Account of the Oracle here mentioned by *Plutarch* is related by *Pausanias* in his *Boeoties*. He tells us the *Orcbomenians* were advised by the Oracle to bring the Bones of *Hesiod* into their Country, as the only means to drive away a Pestilence which raged among them. They obeyed the Oracle, found the Bones, and brought them home. *Tzetzes* says, they erected a Tomb over him, with an Inscription to this Purpose on it:

*Hesiod thy Birth is barren Ascræ's Boast;
Thy dead Remains now grace the Minyan Coast,
Thy Honours to meridian Glory rise,
Grateful thy Name to all the Good and Wise.*

WE have the Knowledge of some few Monuments, which were framed in honour to this great and ancient Poet. *Pausanias* in his *Boeotia* informs us, that his Countrymen the *Boeotians* erected to his Memory an Image with a Harp in his Hand; the same Author tells us in another

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another Place, there was likewise a Statue of *Hesiod* in the Temple of *Jupiter Olympicus*; *Fulvius*, *Ursinus*, and *Boissard* in his *Antiquities* have exhibited a Breast with a Head, and a Trunk without a Head, and a Gem of him; and *Ursinus* says, there is a Statue of Brass of him in the publick College at *Constantinople*; the only Original Monument of him besides now remaining, or at least known, is a Marble Bust in the *Pembroke Collection* at *Wilton*.

THE *Theogony*, and *Works and Days*, are the only undoubted Pieces of our Poet now extant; though 'tis supposed that these Poems have not descended perfect and finish'd to the present Times. The *Theogony*, or *Generation of the Gods*, *Fabrizius* puts out of Dispute to be the Work of *Hesiod*; nor is it doubted, says he, that *Pythagoras* took it for his, who being come down to Hell, feigned he saw the Soul of *Hesiod* tied with Chains to a Brass Pillar, and that of *Homer* hung to a Tree, both exposed to the Biting of Serpents, in punishment for what they had written concerning the Nature of the Gods. This doubtless is the Poem that gave *Herodotus* occasion to say, that *Hesiod* with *Homer* was the first who introduced a *Theogony* among the *Grecians*; the first who gave Names to the Gods, ascribed to them Honours and Arts, giving particular Descriptions of their Persons. The *EPYCA*, or *Works of Hesiod*, *Plutarch* assures us, were used to be sung to the Harp; *Manilius*, whom *Mr. Creech* has evidently proved to be an Author of the *Augustan Age*, in the second Book of his *Astronomy*, takes notice in his Commendation of this Poet and his Writings, that those two Poems were the only remaining Pieces of *Hesiod's* in the

Reign

Reign of *Augustus*. *Manilius* gives this extraordinary Account of them; and of their Author,

Hesiodus memorat, &c.

Hesiod sings the Gods immortal Race,
He sings how *Chaos* bore the earthy Mass;
How Light from Darkness struck did Beams display,
And Infant Stars first stagger'd in their way.
How Name of Brother veil'd a Husband's Love,
And *Juno* bore unaided by her *Jove*.
How twice-born *Bacchus* burst the Thund'rer's Thigh,
And all the Gods that wander through the Sky.
Hence he to Fields descends, manures the Soil,
Instructs the Plowman, and rewards his Toil.
He sings how Corn in Plains, how Vine in Hills Delight;
how both with vast Increase the Olive fills,
How foreign Grafts th' Adulterous Stock receives,
Bears stranger Fruit, and wonders at her Leaves.
An useful Work when Peace and Plenty reign,
And Art joins Nature to improve the Plain.

THERE is a Poem ascribed to *Hesiod*, and commonly printed with the other two, under the Title of *The Shield of Hercules*, which has not one convincing Argument in its favour, by which we may positively declare it a genuine Work. *Aristophanes* the Grammarian supposes it to be spurious, and that it is an Imitation of the *Shield of Achilles* in *Homer*. Of the other Labours of this Poet, we see nothing but the Titles remaining, except some Fragments preserved by *Pausanias*, *Plutarch*, and *Polybius*, who gloried as much in rescuing a Verse from the Ruins of Time, as a Prince in a Victory over his most powerful Enemy.

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nemy. We are told that *Hesiod* composed some other Works, of which we have not even the Titles. We are assured from divers Passages in *Pliny*, that he wrote of the *Vertues of Herbs*, as in the beginning of his *Works and Days*, he speaks of the Wholesomeness of Mallows, and the Daffadil, or Asphacelos; *Quintilian* in his fifth Book denies the Fables of *Æsop* to be originally written by him, but says, the first Author of them was *Hesiod*; and *Plutarch* informs us, that *Æsop* was his Disciple: but nothing certain can be determined upon this Subject.

THIS Greek Poet, with all his Excellences, notwithstanding the Sweetness and easy Plainness of his Style, the Pleasantness of his Fables, and the strict Virtue and Morality of his Precepts, has met with coarse Treatment from Men of Note, who have descanted upon his Writings: *Le Fevre* remarks, that in his Poem of *Works and Days*, he has acted like our Almanack-Makers, who distinguish between fortunate and unfortunate Days, and that this Piece upon the Whole is not much to be valued. *Vives* speaking of his *Theogony*, says, It is of some use for the Understanding of the Poets, but in other respects it is good for nothing. *Quintilian* gives him the Palm only in *media genere dicendi* in the middle Stile, not considering that his Subjects obliged him to rise no higher. *Clement Alexandrinus* takes notice of several Verses stolen verbatim by *Hesiod* out of *Musæus* the Poet; and *Gale* in his Court of the *Gentiles* assures us, that *Hesiod* received some of his choicest Traditions from the Scriptures, if not immediately, yet originally, as will appear probable to any one

who

who will take the trouble to draw up the Parallel.

BUT notwithstanding the Severity of these Censures, *Hesiod* has the Current of learned and judicious Criticism in his favour. *Heinsius* in the Preface to his Edition of this Poet remarks, that among all the Poets, he scarce knew any but *Homer* and *Hesiod*, who understood how to represent Nature in her true native Dress: Which, says he, is infinitely to be preferr'd before all those artful Ways that were used in After-times. He proceeds to tell us, that which to him seem'd the most wonderful was, that Nature had both begun and perfected at the same time her Work in these two Persons, whom for that very reason he makes no scruple to call *Divine*; adding, that Nature had in both these Authors exhibited to us a full and perfect Idea of all human Virtue.

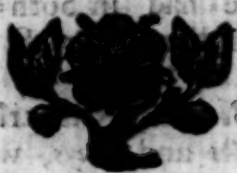
THE learned *Bourne* remarks, that *Hesiod's* Poem, call'd *Works and Days*, was writ with so much Prudence, that even at this day, the reading of it may be of great Use to all such as apply themselves to Moral Philosophy, to Policy, to OEconomy, to Marine Affairs, and to Husbandry; and as for his *Theogony*, or *Generation of the Gods*, he observes, that we may learn much more by that Piece, than the Title seems to import; since those that are curious in finding out the Nature of Things, discover under the Covert of these Fables, natural Truths, and wholesome Maxims, drawn from the deepest Philosophy. *Paterculus* styles him a Poet of a most curious Fancy, one famous and distinguished for the Sweetness of his Verse, most desirous of his own Peace and Quiet.

BUT

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BUT *Virgil* compleats the Character of *Hesiod*; he frequently mentions him with Honour, and follows him as his great Example, particularly thus,

Astræumque cano Romana per oppida Carmen.



O. H. P. P. A. S.

BUT



SAPPHO.

THIS excellent Poetess, who enjoyed the Titles of the *Ninth Lyrick*, and the *Tenth Muse*, was a Native of *Mitylene*, the Capital of the *Æolian* Cities in the Island of *Lesbos*. Her Mother's Name was *Cleis*, but who was her Father is uncertain, there being no less than eight Persons contending for that Honour in *Suidas*; the most received Opinion decides in favour of *Scamandronymus*. She flourished, according to *Suidas*, about the forty second Olympiad, and was Contemporary with *Pittacus*, Tyrant of *Mitylene*, and according to the common Account, one of the seven renowned Sages of *Greece*. She had the Acquaintance of the two famous Poets, *Stesichorus*, and *Alcæus*. The last of these, is said to have been her Suiter, and a Rebuke which she gave him, is still extant in *Aristotle*. He informs us, that *Alcæus* one Day accosting *Sappho*, and telling her he had something to say to her, but was ashamed to utter it: Was it any thing good, replied she, and not rather some Dishonesty which you have conceived in your Mind, you would not be ashamed to disclose it.

Diphilus the Comick Poet, and *Hermesimachus* the *Colophonian*, assure us, that *Anacreon* of *Teos* was also one of her Lovers; but this Amour has been generally esteemed too repugnant to Chronology

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nology to be admitted, and it must still be consider'd as such, notwithstanding Mr. *Barnes's* learned Endeavours to prove the contrary.

WE have no Account by which we can judge of her Quality, whether she was of a Noble or Vulgar Extraction; for though *Strabo* tells us, that her Brother *Charaxus* traded in Wines from *Lesbos* to *Egypt*, yet we can conclude nothing from thence, for People of the best Rank among the Ancients employed themselves in Traffick, and frequently used it as a means to travel. *Solon* when in *Egypt*, defrayed his Expences by Commerce, and *Plato* maintained himself there by the Oils which he sold. Besides *Charaxus*, whom I mentioned, she had also two elder Brothers, *Larychus* and *Eurygnus*. *Larychus* she highly commended in her Verses for his Virtue and Generosity, and particularly for his having distributed Wine among the *Mitylenians* in the *Prytanæum*; but *Charaxus* she as bitterly inveighed against for the extravagant Love he bore to a famous Curtezian called *Rhodope*.

THIS *Rhodope* is reported to have been Fellow-Slave with the celebrated *Æsop*, and to have built one of the Pyramids of *Egypt*. As she was once bathing in the *Nile* (for she was a Native of *Naucratis*, a City of *Egypt*) an Eagle snatch'd one of her Slippers out of the Hands of her Waiting-Woman, and carrying it to *Memphis*, where the King sat administering Justice in a publick Place of the City, drop'd it in his Lap. The King was surprized at the Novelty of the Adventure, and being smitten with the Beauty of the Slipper, immediately dispatch'd Messengers over the Country, with

Orders

Orders to bring him the Woman with whom they should find the Fellow of that Slipper: In short, *Rhodope* being found, was brought to the King, and made by him Queen of *Egypt*.

To return to *Sappho*: She married one *Cerolus*, a Gentleman of great Wealth and Power in the Isle of *Andros*, by whom she had a Daughter named *Cleis*; but he leaving her a Widow very young, she would never endure any second Match; not bearing to confine that Passion to one Person, which as the Ancients tell us, was too violent in her to be restrained even to one Sex. She had many Female Favourites whom she lasciviously caressed, *Athis*, *Andromeda*, *Telephylla*, *Megara*, and others. Upon the account of these Intimates, her Character suffers much from the Charge of dishonest and unnatural Pleasure; it being a constant Tradition that her Amorous Humour was not satisfied with the Addresses of Men, but that she was willing to have her Mistresses as well as her Gallants.

BUT no one seems to have been the Object of her Admiration, so much as the lovely *Phaon*. He was at first a kind of Ferryman, as is reported, and thence fabled to have carry'd *Venus* with a great deal of Care over the Stream in his Boat, and to have received from her as a Reward, the Favour of being the most beautiful Man in the World. *Sappho*, it seems, had not Charms sufficient to subdue this obdurate Lover. He withdrew from her Addresses, and retired from *Lesbos* to *Sicily*. She took a Voyage in pursuit of him, and there, upon that occasion, it is imagined she composed her Hymn to *Venus*. Her Disappointments in Love produced

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duced some of her finest Pieces, particularly that delicate Epistle which *Ovid* makes her write to her ungrateful *Phaon*, the best Thoughts of which, he is supposed to have borrowed from some of her Compositions that are now lost.

It is no wonder, that the Charms of her Person made no Impression upon *Phaon's* Heart, for it seems she was a very plain Lady, and as she is commonly described, of a very ordinary Stature, and of a brown Complexion. *Ovid* knew very well this Part of her Character, and he only had the Art to excuse it.

Si mihi difficilis, &c

To me what Nature has in Charms deny'd,
Is well by Wit's more lasting Charms supply'd ;
I own my short Dimensions ; that they suit,
Just with my Verse, and make with that two Foot.
Tho' short of Stature, yet my Name extends
To Heaven itself, and Earth's remotest Ends.
Brown as I am ; an *Ethiopian* Dame
Inspir'd young *Perseus* with a generous Flame.
White Doves will bill with those of shining Jet,
And the Green Turtle woo a speckled Mate :
If to no Charms thou wilt thy Heart resign,
But such as merits, such as equals thine,
By none alas, by none thou canst be mov'd,
Phaon alone by *Phaon* must be lov'd.

FINDING her Prayers ineffectual, and her dear *Phaon* inexorable, she was transported with the Violence of her Passion, and resolved to get rid of it at any Rate. There was a Promontory in *Acarnania* called *Leucate*, on the Top of which stood a Temple dedicated to *Apollo* ; in this Temple it was usual for despairing Lovers to make their

leucate

their Vows, and afterwards to cast themselves from the Precipice into the Sea ; for it was an established Opinion, that all those who were taken up alive, would immediately find themselves rid of their former Passion. *Sappho* try'd the Cure, but perished in the Experiment. Some write that she was the Inventress of this Custom ; but *Strabo* tells us, that those who understood Antiquity better, reported one *Cephalus* first made the desperate Leap from that fatal Precipice called *the Lovers Leap*. *Ovid* introduces *Sappho* as advised to this Remedy by the Vision of a Sea-Nymph, of which she sent the following Account to the cruel *Phaon*.

Hic ego cum lassos, &c.

Here as I lay and swell'd with Tears the Flood,
 Before my Sight a watry Virgin stood,
 She stood and cry'd, " O you that love in vain,
 " Fly hence and seek the fair *Leucadian* Main ;
 " There stands a Rock, from whose impending
 Steep,
 " *Apollo's* Fane surveys the rolling Deep.
 " There injur'd Lovers leaping from above,
 " Their Flames extinguish, and forget to love :
 " *Deucalion* once with hopeless Fury burn'd,
 " In vain he lov'd, relentless *Pyrrha* scorn'd,
 " But when from hence he plung'd into the Main,
 " *Deucalion* scorn'd, and *Pyrrha* lov'd in vain.
 " Haste, *Sappho*, haste, from high *Leucadia* throw
 " Thy wretched Weight, nor dread the Deeps
 below.

THE *Mitylenians* had her Worth in such high Esteem, and were so sensible of the Glory they received from her being born amongst them,
 that

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that they paid her Sovereign Honours after her Death, and coined Money with her Head for the Impress.

SHE was the Inventress of *Sapphick* Verses, and, according to some Authors, of the *Pæan*, an Instrument of Musick. She wrote in the *Æolick* Dialect; she composed nine Books of Odes, besides Elegies, Epigrams, Iambicks, Epithalamiums, and other Pieces, of which we have nothing remaining entire but a Hymn to *Venus*, which we find in *Dionysius of Halicarnassus*, and an amorous Ode, address'd to one of the young Maids that she admired; and this we meet with in *Longinus*. The last of the two is the most esteemed, and is still acknowledged for the inimitable Example of the most artificial Union, or rather Combat of all the Passions, and of all the moving Circumstances that can enliven a Piece. It is short, and translated by Mr. Addison, runs thus.

On a YOUNG MAID whom she loved.

*Happy as a God is he,
That fond Youth, who plac'd by Thee,
Hears and sees thee sweetly gay
Talk and smile his Soul away.*

*That it was alarm'd my Breast,
And depriv'd my Heart of Rest.
For in speechless Raptures tost,
Whilst I gaz'd, my Voice was lost.*

*The soft Fire with flowing Rein,
Glided swift thro' every Vein,
Darkness o'er my Eyelids hung,
In my Ears faint Murmurs rung.*

Chilling

Chilling Damps my Limbs bedew'd,
 Gentle Tremors thrill'd my Blood,
 Life from my pale Cheeks retir'd,
 Breathless I almost expir'd.

THE Soul of *Sappho* seemed form'd for Love and Poetry, she felt the Passion in all its Warmth, and describ'd it in all its Symptoms. *Horace* calls her *Mascula Sappho*, which *Porphyrio* explains of the Energy of her Poetry, and *Plutarch* compares her to *Cacus* the Son of *Vulcan*, who breath'd out nothing but Flame. *Vossius* says, that none of the Greek Poets excelled *Sappho* for Sweetness of Verse, and that she made *Archilochus* the Model of her Style, but at the same time she took great care to soften and sweeten the Severity of his Expression. What remains of *Sappho's* carries in it something so soft, luscious and charming, even in the Sound of the Words, that *Catullus* himself, who has endeavoured somewhat like them in *Latin*, comes infinitely short of them. And so have all the rest, who have writ their own Thoughts upon that Subject. It must be allowed, says *Rapin*, by that which is left us of the Fragments of *Sappho*, that *Longinus* has great Reason to boast so highly in his Works of the admirable Genius of this Woman, for there are found some Strokes of Delicacy, the most fine, and the most passionate in the World.

THE Criticks pretend, there were two Ladies of this Name, who lived at the same time, and excelled in the Delights of Poetry: But *Ovid*, *Statius*, and others of the *Latin* Poets, confess but one *Sappho*, in Memory of whom the *Romans* erected a noble Statue of *Porphyry*. If there

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were two, the Characters of these Ladies must lie blended as they have hitherto done, and the surviving Nymph must own the Faults, as well as the Virtues of her forgotten Name-sake.

Mr. Oldham complaining of the small Encouragement the Poetic Tribe met with in the Age in which he lived, observes,

*Should mighty Sappho in these days revive,
And hope upon her Stock of Wit to live,
She must to Cresswell's trudge to mend her Gains,
And let her Tail to hire, as well as Brains.*



The Critics pretend, there were two Ladies of this Name, who lived at the same time, and excelled in the Delights of Poetry: But Ovid, in his Works of the admirable Genius of the Woman, for there are found some Strokes of Delicacy, the most fine, and the most passionate in the World.

A L C E U S.

but one Sappho in Memory of whom the Romans erected a noble Statue of Torquay. If there were



ALCÆUS.

THE Account of *Sappho* properly introduces the Life and Character of *Alcæus*. He was a Native of *Mitylene* in the Island of *Lesbos*, and one of the greatest *Lyric* Poets of Antiquity. Some say he was the first Inventor of the *Barbiton*, though others ascribe the Honour to *Terpander*. *Horace* compliments him upon this Subject;

————— *Age dic Latinum, &c.*

Begin sweet Harp a *Roman* Strain,
Those Measures, and those Airs maintain,
First struck by great *Alcæus*' noble Hand.

HE flourish'd in the forty fourth Olympiad at the same time with *Sappho*, who was born at the same Place. We find a Fable in *Aristotle's* Rhetoric, where *Alcæus* is introduced requesting I know not what Favour of *Sappho*, who was not at that time in so good a Humour as he used to be, and refused him what perhaps he offered him the next day.

Οὐλὼ τὴν εἰπεῖν, &c.

Alcæus.

in would I speak, but must thro' Shame conceal
The Thought my eager Tongue would soon reveal.

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D

Sappho.

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Sappho.

Were your Request, O Bard, on Honour built,
Your Cheeks would not have worn these Marks
of Guilt;

But in prompt Words the ready Thought had flown,
And your Heart's honest Meaning quickly shown.

UPON this Occasion *Le Fevre* observes, that a bright Genius who at half a Word can discover wherein the Beauty of Thought and Expression consists, must be sensible that this Application of *Alcæus* is one of those Declarations of Love, which require the critical Minute, and that *Sappho* apprehended perfectly what it meant. Her Answer, says he, is wise, but perhaps too serious upon this Supposition.

THE State of *Mitylene* suffered at this time under the Oppression of *Pittacus*, one of the seven Sages of *Greece*. *Alcæus* undertook the Defence of the Publick Liberty, and put himself at the Head of a strong Party for the Deliverance of his Country; but the Success did not answer his Design at the first Attempt, for he was overthrown and driven by the Tyrant's Power out of the City. It is said by some that he was taken Prisoner by *Pittacus*, who gave him his Liberty after he had treated him in a very scurrilous manner. *Alcæus* had inveighed against this Prince in very vulgar Expressions; he called him, as we learn from *Suidas*, *Splendour-Foot*, *Fat-Guts*, and other opprobrious Names; but *Pittacus* past by the Affront, saying, It was better to forgive, than to punish an Injury. He was forced into Banishment, with many others; but returning with a numerous Force at the Head of the Exiles, he expelled the Tyrant, and confirmed the old Government of the City.

are told, that to inspire his Soldiers with Courage, he made use of the Harmonious Cadence of Numbers, and made his Speeches in Verse at the Head of his Army. But though he appeared so strenuous an Assertor of the Publick Liberty, yet he was suspected to entertain some dangerous Designs against the State, and set himself to oppose the Tyranny with no other View, than to get Possession of the Sovereign Power into his own Hands. I find in *Dionysius Halicarnassæus*, that the Inhabitants of *Mitylene* elected *Pittacus* for their General against the Poet *Alcæus* and his Adherents, whom they had banished. Others say, that having abused *Pittacus's* Clemency, and continuing to cabal and inveigh against him, he was no longer used with favour; which *Ovid* thus expresses,

*Utque Lyrae vates fertur perisse severæ,
Causa sit Exilii dextera læsa tui.*

Or may thy Satire too severe be found,
And thine like poor *Alcæus's* Muse be crown'd,
With Vengeance from the Hand it dares to wound.

We are told by *Diogenes Laertius*, that he had Contest with the Tyrant in Verse, in which Engagement no doubt Victory declared for him.

ALCÆUS seemed to have been of a warlike Genius; we find by him that his House was furnish'd with Helmets and Shields, and Ensigns, and was a Magazine of Military Stores, yet *Histotus* has laid an Imputation upon his Courage; for *Herodotus* reports, that he ran away and left his Arms behind him, when the *Athenians* gained Battle against the *Lesbians*. But it was some

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Comfort to him in his Disgrace, that the Conquerors caused his Arms to be hung up in the Temple of *Minerva* at *Sigeum*. *Horace*, who among all the *Latin* Poets resembles *Alcæus*, confesses as well as he, that he fled from the Battle, and threw down his Arms as being useless in Flight.

Tecum Philippos, &c.

The Bloody Wars, *Philippi's* Field,
Ignobly having lost my Shield,
With thee I saw secure from Wound;
I saw the Flight, when *Pompey* proud,
To *Cæsar's* stronger Virtue bow'd,
And basely bit the bloody Ground.

THE same Adventure happen'd to *Archilochus* before *Alcæus*, and he publickly confessed it.

HE fell into the *Greek* Vice, the Love of Boys; the Name of his Favourite was *Lycus*, whose black Eyes, as *Horace* says, and black Hair had inflamed him.

— *Qui ferox bello, &c.*

He fierce in Arms yet midst his Cares,
When Dangers press'd and noisy Wars,
And stain'd his charming Harp with Blood,
Or when he stemm'd the angry Seas,
Or when arriv'd he sat at Ease,
And laugh'd at all the Fury of the Flood;
The Muses he in sounding Verse
Wou'd sing and *Venus'* Praise rehearse,
With her th' attending wanton Boy;
Or *Lycos* Face surprizing fair
With coal-black Eyes and auburn Hair,
By Nature fitted to entice to Joy.

THIS

THIS Boy, as *Cicero* observes, had a Mole upon his Finger, which in the Poet's Eye was a beautiful Ornament; and remarks farther, that though *Alcæus* had some Share of Courage, yet he had filled his Verses with an excessive Pederasty. He was so amorous, says *Scipio Gentilis*, in his Notes on *Apuleius*, that he compares himself to a Hog, who whilst he eats one Acorn, devours another with his Eyes; just so, says he, when I am enjoying one Girl, I am wishing for another. He had likewise the Character of a great Drinker, and would take occasion from the Difference of each Season of the Year, to illustrate the necessity of plying his Wines, and putting about the Glafs.

THE Poetical Abilities of *Alcæus* are indisputed, and though his Writings were chiefly in the *Lyric* Strain, some Fragments of which are collected by *Fulvius Urfinus*, yet his Muse was capable of treating the sublimest Subjects with a suitable Dignity. This made *Horace* say,

Et te sonantem, &c.

Alcæus too whose Golden Strings,
With manly Strokes sound loftier things;
He sings the Dangers and the Fears
Of Flights, of Sailing and of Wars;
With silent Awe the Shades admire
The tuneful Numbers of his Lyre:
The vulgar Ghosts throng most to hear
Of Kings depos'd, of Feats of War,
And drink them with a greedy Ear. }

MR. *Dacier* observes upon this occasion, that *Alcæus's* Style was noble and strong, and that he treated

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treated of more lofty Subjects than *Sappho*, who says of him in *Ovid*,

Nec plus Alcæus, &c.

—The wide World resounds with *Sappho's* Praise,
Tho' great *Alcæus* more sublimely sings,
And strikes with bolder Rage the sounding Strings.
No less Renown attends the moving Lyre,
Which *Cupid* tunes and *Venus* does inspire.

ALCÆUS, says *Quintilian*, deserves the Golden *Plectrum*, which is given him in that part of his Poems, in which he lashes the Oppression of Tyrants; in this he is greatly useful to the Manners of Mankind, being concise and majestic in his Language, and much like *Homer*; however, he sometimes descends to Mirth and Love, tho' naturally qualified for loftier Subjects.

THERE was another *Alcæus* an *Athenian*, a *Tragic Poet*, and the first, according to some, who composed *Tragedies*. It seems he renounced his Country, which was *Mitylene*, and passed for an *Athenian*. He left ten Pieces, whereof one was *Pasiphaë*; it was that which he produced when he disputed with *Aristophanes*, in the fourth Year of the ninety seventh Olympiad. I find in *Plutarch* another *Alcæus*, different from the preceding, and who is perhaps the same, whom *Porphyry* mentions as a Writer of satirical Iambic Verses, and Epigrams, and who wrote a Poem concerning the Plagiarism of the Historian *Ephorus*. The *Alcæus* of *Plutarch* lived in the hundred and forty fifth Olympiad, in the Year of Rome five hundred and fifty-five, as appears by the Ode he composed on the Battle

tle which *Philip* King of *Macedon* lost in *Thes-
saly*. This Ode represented *Philip* as running
away faster than a Stag, and magnified the num-
ber of the Slain, in order to chagrin him the
more. Nevertheless, *Plutarch* tells us, that *Ti-
tus Flaminius*, who gained that Battle, was more
offended at *Alcæus's* Verses than *Philip*, because
the Ode mentioned the *Ætolians* before the *Ro-
mans*, and seemed thereby to give the *Ætolians* the
chief Honour of the Victory. *Philip* defended
himself against *Alcæus's* Song by another; the
Substance of it is thus given us by *Plutarch*:

*This leafless barkless Trunk, O Passenger,
Is erected as a Gibbet for Alcæus.*

WE are told likewise of one *Alcæus* a *Mis-
senian*, who lived in the Reign of *Vespasian*,
and in that of *Titus*. I know not which of these
Alcæus's suffered a very remarkable Kind of Death
for his Lewdness. This Epitaph is given us by
Vossius,

Ἀλκαίῳ τὰφος ἔτεο, &c.

This is *Alcæus's* Tomb, who died by a Radish,
The Daughter of the Earth, and Punisher of A-
dulterers.

THE meaning is, that *Alcæus* suffered the
Punishment of Adulterers, which consisted in
a certain manner of impaling; they thrust
one of the largest Radishes they could find up
the Adulterer's Fundament, or for want of Ra-
dishes they made use of a Fish with a very large
Head, as the Scholiast of *Juvenal* informs us on
these Words of the tenth Satire;

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—— *Quosdam Macchos et Mugilis intrat,*

—— The Mullet enters some behind.

THIS helps us to understand the Menace of
Catullus,

Ab tum te miserum, &c.

Ah! wretched Thou, and born to luckless Fate,
Who art discover'd by the unshut Gate!
If once, alas! the jealous Husband come,
The Radish, or the Sea-Fish, is thy Doom.



A N A C R E O N.

A *NACREON*, a merry Greek wanton and
amorous, was born at *Teos*, a City and
Sea-Port of *Ionia*, but of what Parents is not a-
greed among Authors; some calling his Father's
Name *Scythinus*, others *Eumelus*, and others
Parthenius or *Aristocritus*; his Mother's Name
was *Eëtia*. Madam *Dacier* endeavours to prove
from *Plato*, that he was a Kinsman of *Plato's*,
and consequently ally'd to the *Codridæ*, the no-
blest Family in *Athens*; but this Conjecture can-
not be supported. The time of his Birth was
about the second Year of the fifty fifth Olympiad,
and the twenty ninth before the Death of *Cyrus*.

AGREEABLE to this Account, this Wri-
ter was about eighteen Years of Age, when

Harpagus

Harpagus the General of *Cyrus* came with an Army against the confederate Cities of the *Ionians* and *Æolians*: The *Milesians* immediately submitted themselves, but the *Phocæans*, a brave People, finding they were too weak to withstand the Enemy, rather chose to abandon their Country than their Liberty, and getting a Fleet together, transported themselves and Families to the Coast of *France*, where being hospitably received by *Nannus* the King of the Country, they built *Marseilles*. The *Teians* soon followed this generous Example, as *Herodotus* informs us; for *Harpagus* having made himself Master of their Walls by the Advantage of his Earth-works, they unanimously went on board their Ships, and sailing into *Thrace*, fixed themselves in the City *Abdera*; where they had not been long, before the *Thracians*, jealous of their new Neighbours, endeavour'd to give them Disturbance. And in these Conflicts, it seems to be that *Anacreon* lost those of his Friends whom he celebrates in his Epigrams. It was also in this Place, that he composed his fifty ninth Ode, which one may conjecture to be wrote whilst he was very young.

WE are not to expect many Particulars of the Life of this Poet, because he seems to have been a professed Despiser of all Business and Concerns of the World. It is certain, that Wine and Love had the Disposal of all his Hours. And if to divert himself, he engaged in so delightful a Study as Poetry, perhaps his Intention was rather to pay his Respects to some other Deities, than to compliment the Muses. *Ovid* himself, tho' one of the freest Livers upon Record, yet could censure *Anacreon's* Verses as of a looser Humour than his own.

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*Quid nisi cum multo Venerem confundere Vino
Præcepit Lyrici Teia Musa senis.*

Venus with *Bacchus* madly to confound,
Was all the wise Advice the *Teian* Lyre could
found.

FROM *Abdera*, we find he took a Voyage to the Court of *Polycrates*, Tyrant of *Samos*, as he is called, thro' the Politeness and good Fortune of its Prince, one of the gayest and most flourishing in *Asia*. A Person of *Anacreon's* Character could not chuse but meet with a welcome Reception, wherever Wit and Pleasure were esteemed; and accordingly we find by the Ancients, that he was so highly honoured by *Polycrates*, as not only to be admitted a Partner of his Friendship, but even of his most secret Counsels. It was here he became enamour'd of the beautiful *Bathyllus*, whose Picture he has so finely drawn in his twenty ninth Ode.

Non aliter, &c. Hor. Epod. 14.

Thus soft *Anacreon* for *Bathyllus* burn'd,
And oft his Love he sadly mourn'd;
He to his Harp did various Grief rehearse,
And wept in an unpolish'd Verse.

To this Minion a celebrated Statue was erected at *Samos*, by *Polycrates*. *Apuleius* has given us a Description of it. *Maximus Tyrius* mentions another favourite Youth named *Smerdias*, the Son of a *Thracian* Prince, and presented to *Polycrates* by some *Grecian* Pirates. *Ælian* reports, that *Polycrates* was so jealous of this last Amour, as to order the Boy to be shaved, and that *Anacreon* composed an elegant Poem upon the

the Occasion, tho' we have nothing now but the remembrance of it remaining.

BESIDES these two, he was in love with the fair *Cleobulus*. He had like to have killed him in the Arms of his Nurse, by rudely jostling of her as he reeled one Day through the Streets, when he was in his Cups; and not content with this, he abused the Child with railing Language. The Nurse wished he might one Day commend him more than he had then abused him. Her Wishes were fulfilled; for *Cleobulus* grew to be a beautiful Youth. *Anacreon* fell in love with him, and wrote several Verses in his Commendation. *Ælian* indeed is very angry if we suspect *Anacreon* of any Dishonesty towards the train of fine Boys whom he admired; but the general Cry runs so loud against him in this Point, that the Imputation must lie heavy upon his Memory.

IF we may believe *Stobæus*, he was no less a Philosopher in his Contempt of Riches, than he was a Poet in his Love of Pleasures. That Author relates, that *Anacreon* having received five Talents of Gold as a Present from *Polycrates*, could not sleep for two Nights successively; so that not being willing to lose his Rest in so bad a Cause, he fairly carried back the Treasure, and told his Patron, that however considerable the Sum might be, it was not an equal Price for the trouble of keeping it. A very uncommon Behaviour in a Poet.

HERMISTONAX, as he is cited in *Athenæus*, gives an Account of *Anacreon's* Amours with *Sappho*; but *Athenæus* himself refutes the Story, by observing that *Sappho* and *Anacreon* could not possibly be Contemporaries; the Lady living under *Alyattes* Father to *Cræsus*, and the Gentle-

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man under *Cyrus* and *Polycrates*. Mr. Bayle remarks upon this Occasion, that *Sappho* and *Anacreon* are so very much alike in their Humours and in their way of Writing, that it is somewhat difficult to distinguish the one from the other: 'Tis pity, says he, that they were not Contemporaries; for if they had, they ought to have been Husband and Wife, that so the World might have seen the Effect of two such amorous and delicate Souls.

How long *Anacreon* continued at *Samos*, is uncertain; but it is probable the Friendship of *Polycrates*, and the Splendor of his Court, had Influence enough to detain him there the greatest part of his Reign. This Opinion also seems confirmed by *Herodotus*, who assures us that *Anacreon* of *Teos* was with that Prince in his Chamber, when he received a Message from *Orates* Governor of *Sardys*, by whose treachery *Polycrates* was soon after betrayed and inhumanly crucified, satisfying by his cruel Death the Envy of an uninterrupted Happiness.

It seems to have been a little before this remarkable Accident, that our Poet left *Samos* and removed to *Athens*, having been invited thither by *Hipparchus* the eldest Son of *Pisistratus*, one of the most virtuous and learned Princes of his Time; who, as *Plato* assures us, sent the most obliging Letters with a Vessel of fifty Oars, to convey him over the *Ægean*. The same Philosopher, who relates this, does *Anacreon* the Honour to style him the wise *Anacreon*; which is the Foundation of Monsieur *Fontanelle's* ingenious Dialogue, where he brings in *Anacreon* and *Aristotle* disputing the Prize of Wisdom, and gives the Advantage to the Poet.

BUT

BUT *Hipparchus* being slain by the Conspiracy of *Harmodius* and *Aristogiton*, he returned to his native Country *Teos*, (for after the Death of *Cyrus* the *Teians* had been suffered to reinhabit their Country unmolested;) here he remained till the Revolt of *Histiæus*, on which account, as *Suidas* tells us, he was obliged once more to fly to *Abdera*, where he died. As his own Verses confess his great Age (tho' not the Effects of it) so *Lucian* reckons him among the long Livers, allowing him fourscore and five Years.

BUT a small Portion of his Works has escaped the Malice of Time; for besides his Odes and Epigrams that still remain, he composed Elegies, Hymns, and Iambics. Some Writers honour him with the Invention of the Lyre. His Poems that are extant, consist chiefly of drunken Catches, *Bacchanalian* Songs, and Applications and Strokes of Love to both Sexes. He wrote in the *Ionick* Dialect. How much he was the Delight both of the Ancients and Moderns, appears sufficiently from those extravagant Praises they have bestowed upon him. *Horace* remembers him with Honour.

Nec si quid olim, &c. L. 4. Od. 9.

We read *Anacreon's* wanton Toys,
 Whilst they our Passions gently move;
 No Envy blasts, no Age destroys,
 And *Sappho's* charming Lyre;
 Preserves her soft Desire,
 And tunes our ravish'd Souls to Love.

THIS Writer had a delicate Genius, and here are inexpressible Charms and Graces in his Poetry. The Verses of *Anacreon*, says *Scaliger*,
 are

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are sweeter than *Indian Sugar*; he passed among the *Greeks* for one of the greatest Masters, both in the Art of Complaisance and in the Softness of Expression. His Beauty, says Mrs. *Le Fevre*, and chiefest Excellency lay in imitating Nature, and in following Reason; he presented not to the Mind any Images but what were noble and natural, and always took great care to avoid the *Poisms*, which were introduced in the latter times contrary to the Practice of the best ancient Poets. The Odes of *Anacreon*, says *Rapin*, are Flowers, Beauties, and perpetual Graces; it is familiar to him to write what's natural and to the Life, he having an Air so delicate, so easy, and so graceful, that among all the Ancients, there is nothing comparable to the Method he took, nor to that kind of Writing he followed. He flows soft and easy, every where diffusing the Joy and Indolence of his Mind thro' his Verse, and tuning his Harp to the smooth and pleasant Temper of his Soul.

BUT no one has given a juster Character of his Writings, than that little God that inspired them, as taught to speak by Mr. *Cowley*.

*All thy Verse is softer far
Than the downy Feathers are
Of my Wings or of my Arrows,
Of my Mother's Doves and Sparrows.
Graceful, Cleanly, Smooth, or Round,
All with Venus' Girdle bound.*

THE Manner of his Death was very extraordinary; for they tell us he was choaked with an unlucky Grape-Stone, which slipped down, as he was regaling on some new Wine. This remarkable

markable End, altogether as odd as his way of Life, has given an excellent Subject to his Successors in Poetry. Among the rest our incomparable Mr. Cowley, who has so happily imitated the Style and Manner of *Anacreon*, has farther repaid his Obligations by honouring him with an Elegy in his own Strain. The Conclusion is very grave and serious, and the most fortunate in the World for the Occasion.

*It grieves me when I see what Fate
Does on the best of Mankind wait,
Poets or Lovers let them be;
'Tis neither Love nor Poesie
Can arm against Death's smallest Dart
The Poet's Head, or Lover's Heart.
But when their Life in its Decline,
Touches th' inevitable Line;
All the World's mortal to them then,
And Wine is Aconite to Men.
Nay, in Death's Hand the Grape-stone proves,
As strong as Thunder is in Jove's.*



PINDAR.



P I N D A R.

THE Prince of the *Lyrick* Poets was a Native of *Thebes* in *Bæotia* ; he was Cotemporary with *Æschylus*, and began to flourish about the seventy sixth Olympiad. His Family was of the lowest Descent, his Father being one *Scopelinus* a *Piper*, tho' some call him *Diaphantus* : His Mother's Name was *Myrtis* or *Myrto*, tho' it is more likely this was a *Greek Lady*, who instructed him in the Art of Poetry, and was Mistress to *Corinna*, who obtain'd from *Pindar* the Prize in a Contention of Verse before the Magistracy of *Thebes* : It happened that he was born at the Solemnity of the *Pythian Games*, which seem'd to predict the Honours they were afterwards to receive by his Compositions ; for it seems the Conquerors in the *Grecian Games*, the *Olympick*, the *Isthmick*, the *Pythian* and *Nemæan*, scarce valued their Honours and Wreaths of Victory, if they were not crowned with his never-fading Laurels, and immortalized by his celestial Song. These Odes of Victory were composed to be sung by a Chorus of Men at publick Festivals and Meetings, assisted with the Advantage of instrumental Musick.

MANY strange Events are said to have happened at the time of his Birth ; the Nymphs it seems danced, and the God *Pan* frisked about when he was born ; but when *Pindar* was grown up and applied himself to write, that rural Deity left off his antick Gambols, and made it his

Business

Business to learn and to sing the new Poems. We are told as an Omen of his future Greatness, that as he slept one day in the Fields, when he was a little Boy, a Swarm of Bees found him and fed him with their Honey; this Accident determined him, no doubt, to the Study of Poetry.

It is supposed that the Meanness of his Father's Fortune, deprived him of the Advantages arising from a learned Education; so that his Accomplishments were chiefly owing to the Bounty of Nature, tho' one *Lasus Hermiones* is mentioned as his Tutor in the Art of Poetry. *Vossius* therefore remarks, that *Pindar* used to brag, that Nature was the only Guide he followed in Poetry; whereas his drudging Rivals were oblig'd to Art, to which he had no regard. On this account he used to compare himself to the soaring Eagle, and the creeping Tribe of Poets to base croaking Ravens.

THE States of *Greece* adored him almost with divine Honours, they admitted him a Share with the Gods in their Gifts and Oblations: The Oracle at *Delphos* commanded the People to present to *Pindar*, a Proportion of their First Fruits. He used to sit in that Temple on an iron Stool, to recite his Verses to the Honour of *Apollo*: This Stool was to be seen there a long time after his Death. He chanced to disoblige his Countrymen the *Thebans*, who laid a severe Fine upon him for favouring and applauding the *Athensians*, who were Enemies to the *Theban* State: But the City of *Athens* made him a Present of double the value of his Fine, and erected a Statue to his Honour. To gratify their Revenge, and to mortify him with Contempt, the Magistrates

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gistrates of *Thebes* allotted the Prize of Poetry to *Corinna* before him, tho' the Lady's Charms it is supposed had some Influence upon the Judges to his Disservice, for she is represented as the greatest Beauty of her Time. This Indignity did not discourage *Hiero*, the famous King of *Syracuse*, from employing *Pindar's* Muse in celebrating his Victories in the *Grecian* Games. This Prince won the Prize in the Horse-race in the *Olympic* Games; he did the same in the *Pythic*, and was also Victor in the Chariot Course. These Successes were magnificently sung by the Poet, who, tho' Digressions take up more than three Fourths of his Odes, yet bestowed the highest Praises upon his Patron, to whom he ascribes all the Virtues of a wise and excellent Prince.

He made it his Prayer to the Gods, that they would bestow upon him all the Happings that Man was capable of; they oblig'd him therefore with an easy and sudden Death, for he died at once as he lean'd upon the Knees of a favourite Boy in the publick Theatre. But it seems his poetic Genius exerted it self after his Death, for *Pausanias* relates, that a few Nights before he expired the Goddess *Proserpine* appear'd to him with an angry Look, and complain'd that she was the only Deity he had not celebrated in his Verses. *Pindar* dying ten Days after, appear'd to an old Woman with a Copy of Verses, in honour of that Goddess, which she preserved by writing them down. His Relations were highly respected after his Decease; the *Lacedaemonians* at the taking of *Thebes* saved the House of *Pindar*, which upon a like Occasion was preserved also by *Alexander* the Great, and the

Ruins

ruins of this House were to be seen at *Thebes* in *Pausanias's* time, who lived under *Antoninus* the Philosopher.

THE Works of *Pindar* which Time has spared consist of four Books of Odes or Triumphal Hymns; he is said to have written Tragedies, *Æneans*, *Dithyrambs*, *Epicks*, *Epigrams*, and other Poems, in the whole seventeen distinct Works; the Dialect he used was the *Dorick*, with a small Mixture of the *Ionick*. His Verses are termed *Eide*, perhaps, says *Vossius*, because these Poems are certain Images of Things; for though they do not imitate Actions, yet they imitate the Affections and Manners; his Odes are all Panegyrics upon the Victors in the *Olympic*, *Pythic*, *Nemean* and *Isthmian* Games. He was used to be hired upon these Occasions; to this purpose there is a Story, that when *Pythous* had conquer'd in the *Nemean* Games, his Friends applied themselves to *Pindar* for a Triumphal Poem; but he insisting upon too high a Price, they resented it, and told him they could buy a Statue in Copper for the same Money. However, upon second Thoughts they complied with his Demand, concluding, that the Verses of *Pindar* would convey the Memory of their Friend farther down to Posterity, than an Image of the most durable Metal.

THE Spirit of *Pindar's* Poetry is so sublime, and the Beauty so peculiar, that it is impossible to make an Abstract of them, because we cannot distinguish the Beauties without separating the Parts, and losing the Numbers. In the Separation of the Parts, the Transitions must be lost, and in losing the Numbers the Poetry dies; and therefore his greatest Judges are

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are contented with giving him the general Title of Prince and Father of *Lyriques*, without entering into the Search of his particular Excellencies; for that prodigious Elevation of Spirit, that amazing Beauty of Sentences, that boundless Scope of Thought, and that daring Liberty of Figures and of Measures, are as likely to deter a Critick, as an Imitator: His *Pegasus*, as Mr. Cowley says, *Flings Writer and Reader too, that sits not sure*: But notwithstanding the Difficulty of his Character, some Men of Eminence have ventur'd to enter more particularly into it.

THE Harmony of the Numbers and the Grandeur of the Diction is inimitable in this Poet, and *Pindar* can never be justly known, but from himself. In his Numbers we are sometimes above the Clouds, sometimes descending, sometimes swimming in a direct Course, rising by little, sinking as gradually, carried aloft as quick as Lightning by such Rapidity of Measures as agitate the Soul, and make the Passions keep time with the Numbers. *Pindar* and *Sophocles*, says *Longinus*, like a rapid Fire, carry every thing before them, though sometimes the Heat is unhappily extinguished: The Magnificence of his Enthusiasm, his Sentiments and Figures, his most happy Copiousness of Things and Words, his peculiar Torrent of Eloquence, made *Quintilian* esteem him the Prince, and that by far, of all the *Lyric* Poets. This, says he, was the reason *Horace* justly thought he was never to be imitated.

BESIDES the Beauty of his Numbers, this Poet is no less eminent for his Moral and Divine Maxims. The Usefulness of his Poetry recommends

recommends him to the Votaries of Religion and Learning. His Hymns are continued Lessons of Morality, recommending to us one Virtue or another, as Justice, Hospitality, Peace, and Piety, Prudence and Contentedness, Fortitude, Veracity, Innocence, Affability, Emulations after Goodness, and such like. His Erudition and Grandeur of Poetry made the Antients give him the Title of the *Wiseſt*, the *Divine*, the *Great*, and the moſt *Sublime*. *Plato* calls him the *Wifeſt* and the *Divine*, *Æſchylus* terms him the *Great*, and *Athenæus* the moſt *Sublime*.

THE Lord *Bacon* takes Notice, that it is peculiar to *Pindar* to ſtrike the Minds of Men, as it were with a Divine Scepter. He is great, ſays *Rapin*, in his Deſigns, vaſt in his Thoughts, bold in his Imaginations, happy in his Expreſſions, and Eloquent in his Diſcourſe; but, he obſerves, his great Vivacity hurries him ſometimes paſt his Judgment, he gives himſelf too much ſwing, his Panegyricks are perpetual Digreſſions, where, rambling from his Subject, he carries the Reader from Fable to Fable, from Alluſion to Alluſion, from one Chimæra to another, for he has the moſt unbridled and irregular Fancy in the World; but this Irregularity is one Character of the Ode, the Nature and Genius of it requiring Tranſports. He is the only Perſon among the *Greeks*, that got any Reputation by this ſort of Writing, for little remains of the other nine *Lyrick* Poets, mentioned by *Petronius*.

Le Fevre tells us, that the Figures which *Pindar* uſes are noble and great, but that they have ſometimes the Air of the *Dithyrambick*; that is, they are bold and raſh, which is by no means agreeable

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agreeable to such as love a correct Style. He adds, that *Pindar* is a grave and serious Author, but that he is too great an Admirer of what they call *Sentences*; that he very often loses his Subject, by reason of his long Digressions, and that after he has been upon the Ramble, he returns all of a sudden, when one least expects him, and at his re-entry he never uses any thing of Ceremony, that is, he takes no manner of care to make any Connection between his first Thoughts, and that which is to follow. He took too much delight in Metaphors and lofty Expressions; but this Fault, says *Vossius*, he ought to be pardon'd, since he thought it more glorious to get now and then a Fall, than to be always groveling upon the Ground.

MR. *Cowley*, says Dr. *Felton*, has succeeded admirably in his Paraphrase upon *Pindar*, but then he was of a Genius equal to his Author; he has no Sentiment but what naturally rises from the Original, and is every way worthy of the *Theban* Poet to have thought and sung. But 'tis a dangerous Enterprize, and too strong for weak Heads to try the Heights, and fathom the Depths of his Flights; the Rapidity of his Motion, the Torrent of his Verse, the sudden Turns and Sallies of his Thought, require a Genius like his own to pursue them, while shallow Brains grow giddy in a Moment, and the first Step carries them beyond their Depth, and hurries them down the Stream. *Horace* hath given us fair Warning; and if any Dabler in Poetry dares venture upon the Experiment, he will only break his Brains, and give a *New Name* to some Room in *Bedlam*. I would intimate the same Caution with respect

to all the other celebrated Masters of Antiquity, though their Sense doth not lie so deep, and their Flights are not so bold and violent as *Pindar's*, that our ordinary Adventurers in *Pindaric* Paraphrase and Translation, may have some regard for their Reputation, if they have none for their Necks, and never bestride the *Muse's Horse*, till they are sure they can keep their Seat, till they can manage him with as much Strength and Dexterity as his old Masters; or, which is all one in plain *English*, till they can write up to the Dignity and Character of their Authors.

FROM *Horace* therefore (who, notwithstanding his Emulation, has allowed *Pindar* his just Praise) and from Mr. *Cowley*, who seems inspired with *Pindar's Muse*, we may enter into the particular Spirit and Genius of this Poet.

Pindarum quisquis studet, &c. Od. 2. lib. 4.

I.

Pindar is imitable by none;
The *Phœnix Pindar* is a vast Species alone.
Who e'er but *Dædalus* with waxen Wings would fly,

And neither sink too low, nor soar too high;

What could he who followed claim,
But of vain Boldness the unhappy Fame;
And by his Fall a Sea to Name?

Pindar's unnavigable Song,
Like a swollen Flood from some steep Mountain
pours along,

The Ocean meets with such a Voice,
From his enlarged Mouth as drowns the Ocean's
Noise.

II.

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II.

Pindar does new *Words* and *Figures* roul,
Down his impetuous *Dithyrambique Tide*,
Which in no *Channel* deigns t'abide,
Which neither *Banks* nor *Dikes* controul,
Whether th' *immortal Gods* he sings,
In a no less *immortal Strain*,
Or the great *Acts of God-descended Kings*,
Who in his *Numbers* still survive and reign.
Each rich *embroider'd Line*,
Which their triumphant *Brows* around
By his sacred *Hand* is bound,
Does all their *starry Diadems* outshine.

III.

Whether at *Pisa's Race* he please
To *carve* in polish'd *Verse* the *Conquerors Images*;
Whether the *swift*, the *skilful*, or the *strong*,
Be crowned in his *artful, nimble, vigorous Song*:
Whether some brave young *Man's* untimely *Fate*
In *Words* worth *dying for* he celebrate
Such *mournful* and such *pleasing Words*,
As *Joy* t'his *Mother's*, and his *Mistress' Grief* affords:
He bids him *live* and grow in *Fame*,
Among the *Stars* he sticks his *Name*;
The *Grave* can but the *Dross* of him devour,
So *small* is *Death's*, so *great* the *Poet's Power*.

IV.

Lo, how th' obsequious *Wind*, and swelling *Air*,
The *Theban Swan* does upward bear
Into the *Walks of Clouds*, where he does play,
And with extended *Wings* opens his liquid *Way*.



ÆSCHYLUS.

74
73
that being accused by the Athenians
for some blaspheinous Expressions against the
ÆSCHYLUS.

ÆSCHYLUS a Tragic Poet, an Athenian, born in the Village of Eleusis, claimed the Honour of descending from the Original Inhabitants of that Country. He was born in the sixty ninth Olympiad according to the Old Scholiast, but as Mr. Stanley, in his most accurate Edition of this Author, makes out by diligent Computation, and his Collection out of Selden's *Marmora Arundeliana*, in the sixty third; which Account places him a Contemporary with Pindar. He was the Son of Euphorion, and Brother of Cynegyrus and Aminias, who distinguished themselves in the Battle of Marathon, and the Sea-Fight of Salamis, and Æschylus was present in this Engagement.

In this Action, we are told by Diodorus Siculus, that Aminias the Younger of the three Brothers, commanded a Squadron of Ships, and behaved with that Conduct and Bravery, that he sunk the Admiral of the Persian Fleet, and killed the commanding Officer; for which his Countrymen distinguish'd him with a signal Reward, and after the Victory was obtained, presented him with the first Prize. To this younger Brother, our Poet was upon a particular Occasion obliged for saving his Life; Ælian relates that

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that *Æschylus* being accused by the *Athenians* for some blasphemous Expressions against the Gods, was accused for his Impiety, and to be stoned to Death; to prevent the Severity of this Sentence, *Aminias* with a happy Presence of Mind drew his Arm from under his Cloak, and shewed it to the Judges in open Court without a Hand, which he had lost at the Battle of *Salamis* in Defence of his Country: This Sight made that Impression upon the Judges, that in a grateful Memory of his good Services, our Poet was immediately ordered to be dismiss'd unpunished. But though he escaped the Penalty of suffering, yet he resented the Indignity of the Prosecution, and resolved to leave a Place where his Life had been in danger: He was the more fixed in this Resolution, by receiving soon after another Affront; for the Judges of Compositions for the Theatre had preferred *Sophocles*, though a young Man, before him, and *Simonides* had won the Prize from him, by an Elegy he wrote upon the Battle of *Marathon*; though *Suidas* gives another reason for his leaving his Country, that while one of his Tragedies was acting, the Seats and Galleries of the House fell down, to the great Astonishment and Damage of the Audience.

ÆSCHYLUS retired to *Sicily*, and applied to the Court of *Hiero*, King of that Island, the great Patron and Protector of Learning in that Age. This Prince had at that time laid the Foundation of a new City called *Ætna*, which was celebrated by his new Guest, by a Tragedy of the same Name, in which he foretold the future Prosperity and Magnificence of the Inhabitants of that rising City. After he

had lived at *Gela* in that Island for some Years, he died of a Fracture of his Scull, caused by an Eagle's letting fall a Tortoise out of his Claws upon his bald Head. The manner of his Death seems to be foretold by an Oracle, which being consulted for that purpose, made answer, that he should die by a Weapon from Heaven. This happened, according to Mr. *Stanley*, in the sixty ninth Year of his Age. He had the Honour of a pompous Funeral from the *Sicilians*, who buried him near the River *Gela*, and the Tragedians of the Country perform'd Plays and Theatrical Exercises at his Tomb. Upon it was inscrib'd an Epitaph of four Verses, which he made himself a short time before his Death.

*Æschylus, Euphorion's Son, whom Athens bore,
Lies here interr'd on Gela's fruitful Shore:
The Plains of Marathon his Worth record,
And Heaps of Medes that fell beneath his Sword.*

ÆSCHYLUS, it is said, wrote sixty six Dramas (being Victor in thirteen) and five Satires; there remain no more than seven of his Tragedies; and notwithstanding the sharp Censures of some Criticks, he must be allowed to have been the Father of the Tragick Art, and introduced Regularity upon the Stage, that was unknown to those that went before him. In the Times of *Thespis* his Predecessor, there was no publick Theatre fix'd to act upon; the Strollers drove about from Place to Place in a Cart. He furnish'd his Actors with Masques, so that they cast off their Dawbings of Lie and Soot; he dress'd his Players suitable to the Characters they

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they were to represent, and introduced the *Buskin*, to make them appear the more like Heroes. So that *Boileau*, in his Art of Poetry, observes justly,

*Next Æschylus the different Persons plac'd,
And with a better Masque his Players grac'd;
Upon a Theatre his Verse express'd,
And shew'd his Hero, with a Buskin dress'd.*

THIS Sentiment was borrow'd from *Horace* in his Art of Poetry,

Post hunc Personæ, &c.

TO avoid shocking his Audience, he contriv'd all the killing Work and bloody Incidents in his Plays, to be transacted behind the Scenes. In this Infancy of Tragedy, it was one of the principal Designs of it, to infuse Terror into the Audience. This Art was so well understood by this Poet, that, as the Story is told of him, when his *Epimæides* appeared upon the Stage, and he had introduced a Chorus of frightful Furies, the People were so astonish'd, that the Children fell into Fits, and the big-bellied Women miscarried upon the Place.

THE Poet *Æschylus* was held in that Veneration by the *Athenians*, that his Tragedies, with those of *Sophocles* and *Euripides*, were enroll'd with the Laws, and made Part of their Statute Book. *Longinus* has judg'd in favour of him, that he had a noble Boldness of Expression, and that his Imaginations were lofty and heroic. It is certain, that he affected pompous Words, and that his Sense too often was obscured by

Figure

Figures; that his Epithets were for the most part bold and daring, as favouring too much of his former Profession, that of a Soldier: But notwithstanding these Imperfections, the Value of his Writings after his Decease was such, that his Countrymen ordained an equal Reward to those Poets, who could alter his Plays to be acted on the Theatre, with those whose Productions were wholly new and of their own.

RAPIN remarks, that *Æschylus* had scarce any Principle for Manners, and for the Decencies. His Fables are too simple, the Contrivance wretched, the Expression obscure and intricate: One can scarce understand any thing of his Tragedy of *Agamemnon*, but because he believed that the Secret of the Theatre is to speak pompously, he bestowed all his Art on the Words, without any regard to the Thoughts. He is sublime and lofty to Extravagance; he never speaks in cold Blood, and says the most indifferent Things in a Tragick Huff; likewise in the Images that he draws, the Colours are too glaring, and the Strokes too gross. The Author of the *Journal de Scavans* observes, that he is a Poet so hard to be understood, that even *Salmasius*, who was an excellent Critick, and whose chief Delight lay in clearing the difficult Places of the most abstruse Authors, was mightily puzzled and perplex'd at the Difficulties he met with in this Poet, which gave him occasion in one of his Books to say, that this *Greek* Writer was more obscure than the Scripture it self. He goes on and says, that *Æschylus* in his Style flies so very high, and uses such lofty Expressions, that this seems to be the only reason of his having the Character of being a Drunkard; as if his Discourse

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proceeded rather from the Fumes of Wine than from solid Reason. Mr. *Dryden* assures us, that *Æschylus* writ nothing in cold Blood, but was always in a Rapture and in Fury with his Audience. The Inspiration was still upon him, he was ever tearing it upon the *Tripes*, or (to run off as madly as he does from one Similitude to another) he was always at high Flood of Passion; even in the dead Ebb, and lowest Water-mark of the Scene.



SOPHOCLES,

A TRAGICK Poet born at *Athens* about the fourth Year of the seventieth Olympiad. He was called the *New Syren*, the *Flower of Poets*, and the *Bee*, from the Sweetness of his Speech. His Father's Name was *Sophilus*, a Man of a Mechanick Profession, who yet spared from the Narrowness of his Fortune sufficient to bestow the most polite Education upon his Son: This Citizen had the Friendship and Esteem of *Pericles* and the Chief Magistrates, and by that means introduced his Son into the Company of the principal Youths, who were delighted with his Wit, and esteemed it a Happiness to be in the Number of his Acquaintance.

SOPHOCLES was but a Boy when *Xerxes* invaded *Greece*, but when that Expedition, which so terrified the Country was defeated, and the

proud

proud *Persian* was obliged to fly ignominiously home, *Sophocles*, who was then at *Salamis*, contributed to celebrate that Victory, and putting himself at the Head of a Company of noble Youths, all naked and anointed with Oil and Perfumes, while they sung a Triumphal *Pæan*, he directed the Measures with his Harp.

HE applied himself to the composing of Tragedies when he was very young: This Accomplishment he learned under the Instruction of *Æschylus*, and he so successfully improved in the Tragick Strain, that he carried the Prize from his Master upon the publick Stage; *Plutarch* gives a particular Account of this Adventure in the Life of *Cimon*. This *Athenian* General understanding that *Theseus* the Son of *Ægeus*, when he fled from *Athens*, and took refuge in the Isle of *Scyros*, was here slain by *Lycomedes* upon certain Suspitions, endeavoured to find out where he was buried; for the Oracle had commanded the *Athenians* to bring home his Ashes, and to honour him as an Hero. *Cimon* could not for a long time learn where he was interred, for those of *Scyros* dissembled the knowledge of it, and were not willing he should search; but at length, after diligent Inquiry, found out the Tomb, and then carried the Reliques in his Admiral Galley, and with great Pomp and Shew brought them into *Athens*, four hundred Years after *Theseus* first left that Country. This Act got *Cimon* the Hearts of the People, who received the Discovery with great Joy and abundance of Thanks. To signalize and perpetuate the Memory of this Deed, and their Sense of it, they appointed that memorable Decision of Victory between the two Tragedians *Æschylus* and

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Sophocles; for the latter having writ the first Play, being yet very young, the Applause of the Theatre was divided; and the Spectators sided into Parties. To determine this, *Aphesion*, who was at that time *Archon*, would not cast Lots who should be Judges, but when *Cimon* and the other Commanders with him came into the Theatre to see the Issue of the Contention, after they had performed the usual Rites to the God of the Festival, the *Archon* came to them, and made them swear (being ten in all) to speak their Judgments in this Dispute according to Equity and Honour. And so being sworn Judges, he made them all sit down to give a decisive Sentence. The Contention for Victory grew warm, and both sides ambitiously strove who should get the Suffrages of such honourable Judges; but the Victory was at last adjudged to *Sophocles*, which *Æschylus* took so ill that he left *Athens*. What a killing Blow must this be to *Æschylus* to see himself vanquished by a first Essay, he, a Veteran, covered over with Glory, and proud of several Poetical Triumphs!

UPON this Success of *Sophocles*, and many extraordinary Instances of Wisdom which the People observed in him; they thought he was the peculiar Care of some Deity, that inspired him with uncommon Knowledge, and attended upon him in all his Actions, so as to work Miracles and bring about wonderful Events. *Plutarch* in the Life of *Numa*, says, it was a current Tradition that *Æsculapius* sojourn'd with *Sophocles* in his Life-time, of which many Instances are told to these Days; and that being dead, another Deity took care to perform his Funerary Rites. There is a Story told by *Cicero*, that

large Golden Goblet being stolen out of the Temple of *Hercules*, *Sophocles* in a Dream saw the God himself telling him who had done it. He disregarded the Vision once and twice, but it being repeated, he went to the Court of *Areopagus*, and gave Information of the Matter. The *Areopagites* ordered the Person whom *Sophocles* had named to be arrested. Upon Examination by Torture, he confessed the Fact, and restored the Goblet; from thence that Temple received the Name of *Hercules the Discoverer*. *Apollo-nius of Tyana* in his Oration before *Domitian* relates, that *Sophocles* had a Power to check the Fury of the Winds, when they threatned to waste and blast the Fields.

THE Conduct of *Sophocles* in the *Athenian* State, raised him to the highest Honours and Advantages in it; he had a warlike Genius, and was joined in a Commission with the Great *Pericles*, to reduce the Island of *Samos* that had rebelled. In the Execution of this Employment it was that *Cicero* gives the Account of the vicious Inclination of this Poet in his Love of Boys; on observing a beautiful Youth passing by, he fell to commending his Charms, and praising the Gracefulness of his Person, which so offended *Pericles*, that he rebuked him, saying, a Man of his Character should have pure Eyes as well as clean Hands. He was certainly of an amorous Disposition, for being old he was asked, whether he could still divert himself with the fair Sex? God forbid, answer'd he, *I am delivered out of the Hands of so furious a Master, and I esteem it the greatest Happiness in the World*; yet he seems to have but an indifferent Opinion of Women in general, for being asked one

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day, why the Women he brought upon the Stage were Persons of Virtue and Honour, whereas *Euripides* introduced none but the Lewd and Infamous; he answer'd, *that Euripides represented them as they really are, and I shew them as they ought to be.*

WE are told by *Cicero* in his *Cato Major*, that *Sophocles*, who lived to a very great Age, continued to write Tragedies to the very last. This occasioned a pleasant Incident, for his Sons made a Complaint to the Judges against him, alledging, that the good old Man their Father did so wholly apply himself to this sort of Study, that he never regarded the Concerns of his Family, and therefore they petitioned, that they would please to assign to him, being *non-Compos*, a Guardian to look after the Estate; but as soon as the old Gentleman heard this, he immediately produced his *Oedipus Coloneus* (which he had writ but a little before) reciting it to the Judges, and then ask'd them, whether they thought a Man, who had lost his Senses, could ever be the Author of that Work? The Judges presently dismiss'd the Cause, acquitted the Father, and pronounced the Sons mad for accusing him.

HE lived to a great Age, and is said to have been Victor four and twenty times. We are told by *Valerius Maximus*, that the last time he carried off the Prize, it was so surprising and unexpected, that he died with the very Joy of it; though *Lucian* will have it, that he met with the same Death with *Anacreon*; and was choaked with a Grape-stone. He chanc'd to die when the City of *Athens* was closely besieged by the *Lacedæmonians*, which hinder'd the Solemnity of his Funeral; but *Lyfander* the Spartan General, being

being commanded by a Vision of the God *Bacchus* (the Patron of Tragedians) to permit one of the chiefest of his Votaries to be buried; he suspended the Attack of the City, and suffer'd the last Rites to be executed to the Honour of this Illustrious and Divine Writer.

THE greatest Part of the Works of this *Greek* Poet are lost; of one hundred and twenty, or twenty three Tragedies which he composed, seven only remain to the present Time.

TRAGEDY in the Original, signifies a *Goat-Song*, so termed from the Goat sacrificed to *Bacchus*, in whose honour Tragedy was used. This Poetry was first acted in the Vintage, which made the *Grammarians* derive the Name from the Lees of Wine in *Greek Trux*, and the compound Word in *Aristophanes* is *Trugody*, or the *Lees Song*, because the Actors besmear'd their Faces with the Lees of Wine. *Athenæus* informs us, that Tragedy and Comedy owed their Origin to Drunken Carouses practised in *Icarium* a Village of *Attica*. *Thespis* was the first who taught Tragedy according to Art, and it being at first no more than extempore Songs, he augmented it with *Dithyrambics*. *Æschylus* by adding a second Person, introduced the *Diverbium*, or Dialogue, and so lessen'd the Chorus, as *Aristotle* informs us. He was also the Inventor of the Stage, the proper Dress and Gestures of the Chorus in the Dance. *Sophocles* added a third Person, found out the Ornament of the Tragic scene, and made the Chorus, consisting only of twelve, to consist of fifteen Persons; for this, he was thought to complete Tragedy: *Thespis*, says *Diogenes*; began Tragedy, *Æschylus* augmented it, and *Sophocles* brought it to perfection. Upon this

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this account *Boileau*, in his *Art of Poetry*, draws him in this Character.

*Then Sophocles the Genius of his Age,
Increas'd the Pomp, and Beauty of the Stage;
Engag'd the Chorus Song in every Part,
And polish'd rugged Verse, by Rules of Art;
He in the Greek did those Perfections gain,
Which the weak Latin never would attain.*

THIS great Reformer of the Stage has met with his Share of Appause from the Learned of all Ages. *Tully* calls him a *Divine Poet*, and *Virgil* in a particular manner distinguishes him by a Mark of Honour from all other Tragick Writers.

Sola Sophocleo tua carmina digna Cothurno.

MR. Barnes, in his *Life of Euripides*, makes an odd Observation upon this Expression of *Virgil's*: Though he bestows, says he, so remarkable a Compliment upon *Sophocles*, and does not so much as mention *Euripides*, this is not so much owing to his own Opinion (for, as I have proved in the Annotations, he has frequently imitated him) as to the Restraint of Metre, since *Euripides* is a Word very improper for Heroic Verse both in *Greek* and *Latin*. The God of Verse himself, the *Delphian Oracle*, says *Bayle*, upon this occasion was forced to submit to the Law of Quantity; he found no other Expedient than to renounce *Hexameter Verse*, and answer in *Iambics*, when he was to name *Euripides*; for *Charephon* the Tragic Poet consulting the *Pythian God* concerning his Friend *Socrates*, was answer'd in *Iambics*, *Sophocles* is Wise, *Euripides*

is more Wise, but the Wisest of all Men is *Socrates*. *Euripides* and *Socrates* are Names altogether unfit for heroic Verse. Now, says he, who can say it is of no great Importance to have one Name rather than another? Here is *Euripides*, who had perhaps a greater Share in the Esteem of *Virgil*, and the rest of the Poets at the Court of *Augustus*, than *Sophocles*; he is, I say, deprived of this Advantage, because they could not bring his Name into their *Hexameters*, and on account of this Impossibility, they were forced to immortalize to his Prejudice, those that were judged inferior to him, but the Laws of Verse pleaded in their favour. It is certain, there was an Emulation highly carried between the two great Tragick Poets *Sophocles* and *Euripides*; it was next to an Impossibility, that two such excellent Poets aspiring to the same Glory, should live in real Friendship; and *Athenæus* relates some Particulars of their Quarrel, that do not much contribute to their Honour; but Mr. *Barnes* pretends, that though these two Poets were a long time at Variance, yet at last they became good Friends. *Sophocles* expressed a great Esteem for *Euripides* when he heard the News of his Death; he ordered a Tragedy to be acted, at which he appeared in Mourning, and made his Actors lay aside their Crowns, nor did he long survive, dying, according to the best Accounts, in the very same Year.

THE Difference between these two Poets seems to consist in this, *Sophocles* outdoes his Rival in the Sublimity and Loftiness of his Expression, but *Euripides* excels him in Neatness and Compactness of Style: *Sophocles* from his Style seems to be rather a Man for Business than for Words;

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Words ; whereas the Style of *Euripides* favours more of the Scholar and the Orator : *Sophocles* preserves the Dignity and the real Character of his Persons ; *Euripides* did not so much consult the Truth of his Manners, and their Conformity to common Life : *Sophocles* wisely chose the most noble and generous Affections to represent, *Euripides* employ'd himself in expressing the more dishonest, the more effeminate and abject Passions.

YET this Greek Poet is severely handled by the French Critick *Rapin* ; he complains that he is too elaborate in his Discourse, that his Art is not hid enough in some of his Pieces, it lies too open, and too near the Light ; that he sometimes becomes obscure, by his too great Affectation to be sublime, and the Nobleness of his Expression is injurious to the Perspicuity ; his Plots are not all so happily unravelled as that of the *Oedipus*. The Discovery of the *Ajax* answers not the Intrigue. The Author ought not to have ended a Spectacle of that Terror and Pity, with a dull and frivolous Contest about the Sepulture of *Ajax*, who had then slain himself. *Oedipus* ought not to have been ignorant of the Assassination of the King of *Thebes*, the Ignorance he is in of the Murder, which makes all the Beauty of the Intrigue, is not probable. This Tragedy receives better Quarter from Mr. *Dryden* ; he says, that *Oedipus* was the most celebrated Piece of all Antiquity, that *Sophocles*, not only the greatest Wit, but one of the greatest Men in *Athens*, made it for the Stage at the publick Cost, and that it had the Reputation of being his Master-piece, not only among the seven Tragedies of his that still remain, but of the greater Number which are perished.

EURIPIDES.



EURIPIDES,

A Greek Poet, one of those who excelled in Tragedy, was born in the first Year of the seventy fifth Olympiad in the Island of *Salamis*, whither his Father and Mother retired with many *Athenian* Families, a little before *Xerxes* invaded *Attica*. His Mother *Clito* was big with him when she left her Country, together with her Husband, and was accidentally delivered the very Day that the *Greeks* defeated the Fleet of the *Persian* King near the Island; and it is pretended, because that Victory was obtained near *Euripus*, the Child *Clito* brought into the World, was called *Euripides*. *Mnesarchus*, the Father of this Poet, was an *Athenian* of the *Oenoide* Tribe, and of the People called *Phile*, and in all probability had suffered in his own Country the Punishment of Bankrupts. They used in some parts of *Attica* to carry Persons, who did not pay their Debts, into an open place, where they were commanded to sit down and throw a Bushel: This was a Mark of Infamy. As to *Clito*, it is said she was an Herb-woman; *Aristophanes* asserts she got her living by selling of Greens; and *Valerius Maximus* observes, that the Mother of *Euripides*, and the Father of *Demosthenes*, were unknown even in their own Ages; but

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but the greatest part of Authors agree that the former sold Herbs, and the latter Knives.

HOWEVER, some will derive him from a Family of Rank and Distinction. The Oracle of *Apollo* was consulted upon the Fate of *Euripides*, while *Clito* was big with him, which seems to imply, that she was not so mean as an Herb-woman; for the Husband of so ordinary a Person, would scarce trouble *Apollo* about the Fortune of a Child unborn. The Oracle returned this Answer,

Ἔσται σοὶ Κῆρος, &c.

*To thee Mnesarchus Fate a Son shall raise,
Whom Greece shall honour, whom the World shall
praise;
And whose victorious Brow, the sacred Crown shall
grace.*

MNESARCHUS, says *Agellius*, concluding that the Oracle implied his Son, when he grew up, should win the Prize in the *Olympick Games*, took care to bring him up in the Exercise of Strength and Activity performed in those Solemnities; and when his Body was properly prepared, he took him to *Olympia* to try his Fortune: He was at first refused, because they questioned his Age; he was afterwards admitted a Combatant in the Games of *Theseus*, and those of *Ceres*, and was crowned. Passing afterwards from the Care of his Body to the Improvement of his Genius, he studied under the most celebrated Masters; he frequented the Lectures of *Anaxagoras* for natural Philosophy, and of *Prodicus* for Rhetorick; some place him under *Socrates* for
Moral

Moral Philosophy, but that probably is a Mistake, for *Socrates* was younger than *Euripides* by almost thirteen Years; and seems, says Mr. *Barnes*, to have borrowed many Things from him, of whom he often makes honourable Mention, and that in *Plato*. We are told by *Ælian*, that *Socrates* seldom appeared at the Theatre, unless when *Euripides* the tragic Poet contended with the new Tragedians, at which Times he usually attended; and when *Euripides* had the Contest in the *Pyæum*, he was also present, having a peculiar Esteem for the Man, in regard both to his Wisdom and the Excellence of his Compositions. Nor should I wonder at this, tho' I were persuaded the Philosopher had no hand in the Production of the Poet, for the Tragedies of *Euripides* were so full of fine Morality, that they were infinitely pleasing to *Socrates*; for *Euripides* was properly called the Dramatic Philosopher.

It is observed, that in his Tragedies he took a particular Delight in vilifying the Fair Sex; he introduced the most vicious Women into his Plays, Sorceresses, Adulteresses, Murderers of Husbands, and incestuous Characters, for which reason, he obtain'd the Name of *The Woman-Hater*. He is said, according to *Agellius*, to have conceived a violent Aversion to most of the Female Sex, either from a natural Antipathy to their Company, or because he had two Wives at the same time, (such Practices being allowed by a Decree of the *Athenians*) and was thoroughly weary of his Consorts. Some rather believe, he had no more than one Wife at a time, the Name of the first was *Chæriæa*, by whom he had three Sons; but her disorderly Life

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Life obliged him to repudiate her: The second he married was at least as leud as the first; I know not which of the two it was he found one day with one of his own Actors, but probably it was the last, since the Ignominy this exposed him to, and the frequent Raillery of the Comic Poets on this Account, made him leave *Athens*. If *Athenæus* is to be believed, we should have no extraordinary Opinion of *Euripides's* Chastity. He assures us, this Poet was a great Lover of Women, and that *Sophocles* hearing somebody say, that *Euripides* hated them furiously; In his Tragedies, replied he, I grant he does, but he loves them passionately in bed. The Criticks are not forward in believing what is said of his Adventures in *Macedonia*. He was about seventy two Years of Age when he retired thither, and it is said that at an Entertainment of *Archelaus* the *Macedonian* King, *Euripides* having drank too freely, fell a kissing the Poet *Agathon*, who sat by him, and was about forty Years old; and that upon the Prince's asking him, if he thought *Agathon* was still an agreeable Object, he answer'd, by *Jupiter* I think he is very amiable, for the Autumn of beautiful Persons has something lovely in it. It is said that he was in love with *Agathon*, and to please him, he composed the Tragedy of *Chryseippus*. He entertained likewise, they say, a leud Commerce with the Minion of *Archelaus*, and that as he was going to him by Night, he was met by the Women, and torn to pieces. But the Character of *Euripides* has not sunk under the Weight of these Aspersions, for they are absolutely inconsistent, and find no Credit with the most learned Judges.

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THE *Macedonian* Court was at that time the common Refuge of learned Men; and his *Euripides* repaired, and met with a very agreeable Reception. *Archelaus* was a most passionate Admirer of Learning, and soon distinguishing the Abilities of his Guest, he trusted him with the sole Administration of Affairs, and made him his Prime Minister in full Power. Among many Instances of Esteem, he did the Poet justice upon a young Courtier, one *Decamnichus*, who reproaching him for his stinking Breath, *Euripides* replied, It might well be so, since so many Secrets had lain so long rotten in his Mouth. *Archelaus* not thinking him sufficiently revenged by this Answer, deliver'd up *Decamnichus* to him, to be soundly lashed; it is pretended that *Euripides* made use of the King's Permission, and did it to the Purpose. But this exceeding Respect shewed him, could not upon earnest Sollicitation prevail upon him to celebrate the Actions of his royal Patron in a tragick Piece: he handsomely evaded the King's importunity; I pray the Gods your Majesty's Reign may never afford the Subject of a Tragedy.

EURIPIDES unfortunately came to a tragick End, about the seventy fifth Year of his Age; for as he was walking in a Wood, (some say) according to his Custom, the Intenseness of his Thoughts led him too far, till he was met alone by the Prince's Dogs, who was then out hunting, and those cursed Hounds tore him in pieces. Others say, it was not by Accident he was exposed to the Fury of the Dogs, but that they were purposely let loose upon him, and that by the Artifices of two Poets, *Arideus* a *Macedonian*, and *Gratevas* a *Thessalian*, who were

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were jealous of his Glory, and hired the Keeper of the King's Dogs with a Sum of Money to do it. *Valerius Maximus* only says, that *Euripides* having supped with the King, and returning home, was so torn by Dogs that he died of his Wounds. *Ovid*, without doubt, referr'd in his *Ibis* to the tragical End of this Poet:

*Utque Cothurnatum Vatem tutela Dianæ,
Dilaniet vigilum te quoque turba Canum.*
*Thine be the Fate of that same buskin'd Bard,
Butcher'd by Dogs, Diana's surly Guard.*

His sad Death was lamented with general Sorrow by the *Athenians*; his Body was removed from *Bormiscus*, where he died, to *Pella* the Metropolis of *Macedonia*; where King *Archelaus* not only celebrated his Obsequies in the most magnificent manner, but, as *Solinus* says, cut off his Hair, and went into solemn Mourning, as a Testimony of the Respect he had for him. He had a Monument erected to his Memory, with an Epitaph inscrib'd; and the *Macedonians* preserved his Remains with that Regard, that when the *Athenian* Embassadors came to desire Leave to transfer his Bones to *Athens*, they absolutely refused, and could not be induced to part with his Relicks upon any account. We are told by *Plutarch*, that this Monument at *Pella* was struck with Lightning, which, after the Superstition of those Times, was a Proof that he was a Favourite of the Gods. The *Athenians* not being able to obtain the Bones of *Euripides*, erected a stately *Cenotaphium* to him, which, *Pausanias* says, was standing in his Time. *Philemon*, a Friend of his, was so af-

fecte

acted by his Death, that he declared, if he thought, as some assured him, that the Dead reserved a Sense of Things, he would hang himself to enjoy a Sight of *Euripides*.

Εἰ ταῖς ἀλήθειαισι, &c.

*If Shades have Sense, as some pretend,
A friendly Cord my Life should end,
That I once more might see my Friend.*

THE Fate of *Anaxagoras* determin'd *Euripides*, when he was about eighteen Years of Age, to take off his Mind from natural Philosophy, and apply his Studies to *Dramatic Poetry*. The Master's Learning was the occasion of his Banishment by the Citizens, as a Reviler of the publick Gods, and our Poet the Scholar was in danger of the same Censure, for introducing a new and impious Distinction in the Doctrine of Oaths.

Ἡ γλῶσσ' ὀμώμοχ, ἡ δὲ Φρήν ἀμώμοτος.

My Tongue has sworn, but still my Mind is free.

THERE was one *Hygieanon*, who could not bear this Verse, he charged *Euripides* with Impiety, as a Teacher and Protector of Perjury. The Poet demanded to be tried by his proper Judges; appealing to the Jurisdiction of the Judges appointed over all theatrical Controversies, declaring that he was ready to give an Account of his Faith and Doctrine before that Tribunal; and that it was there, and not before the usual Courts that he ought to be accused. This Defence, it is supposed brought him off for

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for that Time. Upon another Occasion, he dogmatized so gravely in defence of covetous Men, that the Audience were enraged and resolved to demolish him and the Actor; *Euripides* appearing upon the Stage, desiring them to have Patience, and they should find the old Miser should suffer the Punishment he deserved. Another time some Persons were offended with him, for bringing so wicked a Wretch as *Ixion* upon the Stage: Take notice, said he, that before I let him go off, I shall tie him to a Wheel. But he was oblig'd to alter the two *first* Verses of his *Menalippus*, which gave offence.

——— Jupiter, if his Name be so,
For 'tis by Hearsay only that I know.

HE was mighty fond of this Tragedy, as being excellently well writ, but he was forced to alter the first Lines into what they are at present.

Jove, for we own he has receiv'd that Name
From Truth alone, and not from common Fame.

HE would not always comply with his Audience in things of this nature; for one day, the People of *Athens* desiring him to strike out a certain Passage in a Tragedy of his, he came upon the Stage and told them; I do not compose my Works to learn of you, but to teach you.

THERE remain to us but twenty Tragedies of *Euripides*; to inspire his Mind with solemn and terrible Ideas, he used to compose his Pieces in a gloomy dismal Cave, in the Island of *Salamis*. We are told by *Varro*, that of seventy
five

five Tragedies which he writ, five only carried off the Prize, he being often vanquished by the most groveling Pretenders to Poetry: one *Xenocles* a wretched Poetaster was preferred before him, in a Contest of four Plays against four Plays, at the Celebration of the eightieth Olympiad. His Poems cost him a great deal of Labour; he complained once to the Poet *Alceſtis*, that for the last three Days he had not been able to make above three Verses, tho' he had studied with great Application; the other answer'd with an Air of Vanity, that he had made a hundred with ease: But, replied *Euripides*, there is this Difference between yours and mine, that mine will continue thro' the utmost Extent of Time, and yours will perish in three Days.

In the Opinion of many excellent Judges, *Euripides* was the most accomplish'd of all the tragick Poets; yet he had his Rivals in Fame, who disputed the Prize with him. His Poems are full of moral Aphorisms, and contain many Tenets of natural Philosophy: As many Verses, says *Cicero*, that I read in *Euripides*, I find so many Maxims of Morality. Can it be thought strange after this, that that illustrious Orator should prepare himself for Death by reading of his Poet? It is observed that the Assassins, who pursu'd him and murder'd him, found him reading in his Litter the *Medea* of *Euripides*. He was a severe grave Writer, and indifferent to Pleasure. We are told by *Galen*, that the Original of his Works came into *Ptolemy's* hands, when he was founding his famous Library at *Alexandria*. King *Ptolemy*, says he, went to the *Athenians*, to borrow the original Manuscripts of *Sophocles*, *Æschylus*, and *Euripides*,

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pides, in order to transcribe them for his Library, laying down in their Hands fifteen Talents of Silver by way of Security. Upon the Receipt of the Books, he took care to have them wrote out on the fairest Parchment, and set off with the richest Ornaments; and then keeping the Originals, he sent the Copies to *Athens* with this Message, that the King desired the City to accept of those Books, and of the fifteen Talents he had left in their Hands. That they had no reason to be angry, since if he had neither sent them the Originals, nor the Copies, he had done them no Injury, as long as they themselves by taking the Security, supposed it a sufficient Reparation in case of a Loss.

His Rivals in Tragedy were *Æschylus* and *Sophocles*; there is a Division among the Critics concerning the Pre-eminence of these Poets: Each of them has their Adherents, who give him the first Place, and there are also some good Judges, who will determine nothing concerning it. *Quintilian* seems to be of this Party, and yet it is easy to see, that all Things considered, he gives the preference to *Euripides*. *Sophocles*, says he, and *Euripides* have by far surpassed *Æschylus* on this Head, and brought the Art to a much greater degree of Perfection: It is a Question much canvassed, to which of these two in their different Manners, the Preference in Poetry is due; and as it has no relation to my present Subject, I shall leave it undecided. But this must be acknowledged by all, that to Persons designed for the Bar, *Euripides* would be far more useful. For his Style (which those find fault with, who think the Majesty, the Air and the Diction of *Sophocles* more sublime) is more nearly

early allied to that of an Orator. His Sentences are also thick sown, nor does he fall far short of the Sages themselves, when he handles their Topicks. In his Method of arguing and replying, he is not inferior to the most eminent speakers at the Bar. In raising the Passions he is universally admirable, but in that of Compassion inimitable. *Menander*, as he himself testifies, held him in the highest Esteem, and copied him in a different Work.

EURIPIDES, says *Borrichius*, for Eloquence and Prudence was equal to, if not beyond *Sophocles*. He took more care in the placing of his Words, and ordering of his Sentences than ever *Sophocles* did; and yet *Aristotle* thought him not exact enough in the Contrivance of his Fables. *Sophocles*, by his Style, seems rather to be a Man for Business than for Words, whereas the Style of *Euripides* favours more of the Scholar and the Orator. The Smoothness of his Composition, his Excellency in *Dramatic Poetry*, the Soundness of his Morals, convey'd in the sweetest Numbers, the Purity of his *Attic Style*, and his Power in moving the Passions; especially the softer ones of Grief and Pity, were so universally admired, and his Glory so far spread, that the *Athenians* who were taken Prisoners in the fatal Overthrow under *Nicias*, were preserved from perpetual Exile and Ruin, by the astonishing Respects that the *Sicilians*, Enemies and Strangers, paid to the Wit and Fame of their illustrious Countryman. As many as could repeat any *Euripides's* Verses, were rewarded with their Liberty, and generously sent home with Marks of Honour. The *Sicilians* gave another remarkable Proof of their Esteem for *Euripides*: A

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Caunian Vessel chased by Pirates, endeavoured to make some Port of *Sicily*, but could not obtain Permission to enter till it was known, there were some Persons on board that could rehearse some Lines of this celebrated *Athenian*.

THIS Poet, however, is condemned by the Learned, for not observing poetical Probability, a Rule so highly recommended to all Poets by *Aristotle*, and agreeable to the Advice of *Horace*,

Aut famam sequere, aut convenientia finge.

*Keep to old Tales, or if you must have new,
Feign Things coherent, that may look like True.*

HE is not exact in the Contrivance of his Fables, his Characters want Variety, he falls often into the same Thoughts upon the same Adventures; he does not religiously enough observe Decencies, and by a too great Affectation to be morally sententious, he is not so ardent and passionate as he ought to be; for this Reason he goes not to the Heart as much as *Sophocles*. There are Precipitations in the Preparation of his Incidents, as in the *Suppliants*, where *Theseus* levies an Army, marches from *Athens* to *Thebes*, and returns the same Day. The Discoveries of his Plots are not at all natural, these are perpetual Machines. *Diana* makes the Discovery in *Hippolitus*; *Minerva*, in that of *Iphigenia*; *Thetis*, that of *Andromache*; *Castor* and *Pollux*, that of *Helena* and that of *Electra* and so of others. *Euripides*, has been censured for making his Characters more wicked than they ought to be in Tragedy: It was the Observation of those Times, that Comedy (whose Province was Humour and low Matter) was represented

represent Things worse than the Truth; History to describe the Truth; but Tragedy was to invent Things better than the Truth. Whether these Distinctions were exact, I shall not take upon me to determine.



SIMONIDES,

ONE of the Principal of the Grecian Poets:

He was a Native of *Ceos*, an Island of the *Egean* Sea: He flourished in the time of *Xerxes's* Expedition, that is, about the seventy fifth Olympiad. His Father's Name was *Leoprepes*; *Æli-* mentions him for the good Advice he gave two young Men who were intimate Companions. Two particular Friends asked him which was the best way to render their Friendship perpetual. You must never be angry, said he, one with another at the same time, but one of you must shew respect to the Anger of the other. This Poet set up a School at *Carthea* in that Island, where he introduced the Art of Dancing and singing in Chorus; he fixed his School near the temple of *Apollo* in that City.

BUT he soon left his Native Country, upon some disappointment it is supposed, and retired to *Sicily*, where he was entertained in the Court of *Hiero*, a wise Prince, and a Royal Patron of learned Men. *Pausanias* the *Lacedæmonian* General, who defeated the *Persians* at the Battle

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of *Plataea*, had a great Respect for *Simonides* upon the account of his Wisdom and Poetical Accomplishments. He therefore procured him to compose an Inscription in Verse to be inscribed upon a Golden Tripod, which he found among the Spoils, and presented to the Temple of *Delphos*; the Epigram was to this Effect, That by the Conduct of *Pausanias*, the Barbarians were defeated at the Battle of *Plataea*, and in Acknowledgment of the Victory, that Present was by him dedicated to *Apollo*. But the *Lacedaemonians* caused the Verses to be raz'd out, and in their stead engraved only the Names of such confederate Cities as had been instrumental in overthrowing the *Persians*. He wrote a Poem in Celebration of the Victory of *Salamis*, and contracted an Acquaintance with *Themistocles* who won that Battle: He obtained the Prize from *Aeschylus*, by an Elegy he wrote upon the Victory at *Marathon*; and the Elegies he composed upon the *Greeks* that were slain at the Battle of *Plataea*, were in the time of *Pausanias* to be seen upon their Tombs.

It is said, that the Gods preserved him twice from imminent Danger of Death, upon the account of his Virtue. He happened, it seems, to sup at the House of *Scopas*, who was a considerable Man for his noble Birth and great Riches; after he had recited the Poem he had made for a set Price for that Man's Honour, who was Victor in the Wrestling Games, wherein he inserted an Encomium upon *Castor* and *Pollux*, he was told he should receive one half of the Price agreed upon, but that he might, if he thought fit, ask the other half of the *Tyndarids* on whom he had bestowed as many Praises as

had upon *Scopas*. Soon after he was informed, that two young Gentlemen upon white Horses were at the Door, and desired to speak with him; he went out, and saw no-body; in the mean time, the Room where he had left *Scopas* and the other Guests, fell down, and they were all killed. Upon this Occasion it was, that he invented the Art of *Local Memory*; for when *Scopas* and his Guests were crushed to pieces by the fall of the Room, they were so bruised together and disfigured, that they could not be known one from another. And yet there was a Necessity to know them, for those who designed to bury them, desired to perform that Duty, each to his Relation. *Simonides* removed the Difficulty, he remember'd in what Place each of the Guests sat at Table, and was by that means capable to tell each of their Relations, which of them was to be buried by him. Afterwards considering how necessary Order is to preserve the Ideas of Objects, he invented the Method of annexing them to certain Places, and became the Inventor of *Local Memory*. Some Authors say, that he made use of some certain Medicines to acquire a good Memory, which produced the intended Effect.

THE other Miracle, by which his Life was saved, is related thus: His Deliverance was owing to the seasonable Advice he received in his sleep; for when he was ready to take Shipping, and had buried the dead Body of a Man which lay on the Shore; he was warned by an Apparition of the same Man, not to go to Sea the next day, but to stay at Land. He took the Advice; they who had taken shipping perished in Sight by the Storm, and were swallowed up

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in the Waves: *Simonides* rejoiced because he had trusted his Life rather to a Dream than a Ship. Being mindful of the Favour, he immortalized that Man in a most elegant Poem, and erected a better and more durable Tomb to him, than that which he had before raised upon the desert Sands. He did not think that Humanity required any thing of him besides the burying of the dead Body; but being so well rewarded for that Favour, he inscribed a memorable Epitaph upon the Tomb to this Effect; This is the Tomb of the Man that saved the Life of *Simonides* of *Geos*, and who, after his Death, was grateful to the Living. This Story introduces another told of him by *Ælian*. *Pausanias*, the *Lacedæmonian* General, sitting at Table with *Simonides*, ordered him to deliver some remarkable Maxim. Remember, answer'd he, that you are a Man: This Saying seem'd so insipid to *Pausanias*, that he did not regard it; but when he happened to be in a Place of Refuge, where he struggled with an intolerable Hunger, and out of which he could not come without running the hazard of being put to death, a Misfortune he brought upon himself by his Ambition, he remember'd the Words of that Poet, and cry'd out three times, O *Simonides*, how important was the Meaning of the Exhortation you gave me?

BUT the most remarkable Transaction of his Life was what happened between him and King *Hiero* his Patron. The Story is told with most advantage by *Cicero*, in the Person of *Cotta* the Pontiff. Ask me, says he, what Kind of Being God is? I will answer in the Words of *Simonides*, who when the Tyrant *Hiero* demanded this Question, required a Day to consider of it; when next Day

he asked him the same Question, *Simonides* required two Days more ; when he had often doubled the Time, he required more ; and *Hiero* being surprised, asked him the reason of it ; It is, says he, because *the longer I consider, the more obscure the Subject appears to me*. Of all the Sayings ascribed to him, this was remarkable, he said that *Necessity* was a thing which the Gods themselves would not oppose nor resist.

BUT these Instances of his Piety and Humanity will by no means excuse his insatiable Avarice and Thirst for Wealth : When he was asked the reason of his being so covetous in his old Age, he said, I had rather leave something to my Enemies after my Death, than want the Assistance of my Friends during my Life ; and that being by his Years deprived of other Pleasures, he recreated his old Age with the only delight he took in heaping up Riches. We are told his Way of Life was narrow and mean, that he was frugal to Excess, and covetous even of dishonest Gain ; that his great Age did not restrain him from applying to the Court of *Hiero*, for says *Ælian*, the *Cean* was exceeding covetous, and it is said, the great Generosity of that Prince induced him to it the more ; he was never at a loss for an Answer when asked, why he took such Pleasure in Saving, but his Answers were poor and trifling. Whilst he was at *Syracuse*, the King supplied him from day to day with every thing that was necessary for his Maintenance ; he sold the greatest part of it, and allowed for his reason, that he had a mind to shew his Frugality and *Hiero's* Magnificence ; which was a wretched Subterfuge.

He has been blamed for being the first that let out the Muses for hire, not as if the Poets that lived before him had refused Rewards, but abhorred to prostitute their Praises upon Subjects infamous and unworthy. I do not, says *Callimachus*, cherish a mercenary Muse like *Simonides* the Grandson of *Hyllichus*; he is taxed by *Anacreon* for the same Fault. It is certain, he would not sing upon Trust, nor rely upon the Generosity of his Heroes. He dishonoured the Muses by his mercenary Spirit, and disgracefully became a Proverb, *Simonidis Cantilenæ*. He was used to say, I have two Trunks, one for Salaries, and the other for Favours; I open them from time to time, and I always find the Trunk for Salaries full, and that for Favours empty: he needed not wonder at it, for since he did nothing *gratis*, he could not pretend to many Presents, but to be paid only according to the Agreement he made with his Patrons.

PHÆDRUS in his Fables relates, that *Simonides* strolled about the Towns of *Asia*, to get Money by singing the Praises of the Conquerors in the publick Games. This appears also by a Story mentioned by *Aristotle*: A Man, says he, who had won the *Olympic* Prize in the Race of Mules desired *Simonides* to make a Triumphal Song upon that Subject; the Poet not satisfied with the Reward that was offered, answered, that the Subject was so low that it would not admit of the lofty Ornaments of a Poem, for the Victory had been obtained in a creeping Race with Mules, and he pretended that a Mule did not afford matter for an Encomium; but having a better Price offered him which pleased him, he finished the Poem, beginning in a noble Strain,

Χαίρετ' ἀλλοπόδων θύγατρες ἱππῶν.

Hail Daughters of the Wind-hoof'd Steeds.

BUT the Money he scraped together in the *Asian* Cities he lost in his Return; for shipping himself for the Isle of *Ceos* his native Country, the Ship was cast away, and every one strove to save himself with whatever he could carry. *Simonides*, says *Phædrus*, took nothing, and being asked the reason of it, he answer'd, It is because all that I have is with me; several of his shipwreck'd Companions were drowned, sinking under the Weight of what they had endeavoured to save. Those who landed were plunder'd by Robbers. Every one went to *Clazomenie*, a Town not far from the Place where the Ship was cast away. A Citizen who loved Learning, and had read some Poems of *Simonides* with great Admiration, knowing him, received him hospitably, whilst the rest were forced to beg in the Streets. The Poet meeting them, told them his Answer was right.

SIMONIDES lived to a great Age, about ninety Years; he died it is supposed in the Court of King *Hiero*, a Year before that Prince his Patron. It was the Queen of this *Sicilian* Tyrant who asked *Simonides*, whether it was better to acquire Learning than Riches; who answer'd, that Riches were better than Learning, for I see, said he, every day the Learned attending upon the Rich. He was buried with great Magnificence, and had a Monument erected over him. We are told by *Suidas*, that *Phænx*, General of the *Agrigentines*, being at War with the *Syracusans*, barbarously destroyed *Simonides's* Tomb,

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and built a Tower with the Materials of it, and it happened that the Town was taken through that part of the Wall where that very Tower was built.

THESE are the principal Incidents to be met with concerning the Life and Death of this Greek Poet: The Fragments of his Works that remain are scattered up and down in various Authors, but are collected together by *Ursinus*. His Wit was beyond the Censure of the Criticks: His Poetry was composed in almost all Strains, but he succeeded chiefly in Elegies: He was a moving and passionate Writer. The Style of *Simonides*, says *Quintilian*, was plain, but fitted to the Subject with a certain Sweetness. His principal Excellency lay in Commiseration, and he was by some preferred to all Authors upon that account. *Dionysius of Halicarnassus* confesses, that this Poet, among other Virtues, had the Talent of moving to Pity, and places him in that respect much above *Pindar*; the Lamentations of *Simonides* was one of his most famous Poems; to this Piece *Horace* alludes,

Sed ne relictis, &c.

*Enough my Muse, Complaints forbear,
With me to shady Grotts retire, &c.*

CATULLUS refers to the Art of *Simonides* in drawing Tears.

Mæstius Lacrymis Simonideis.

More sorrowful than Simonides's Tears.

BUT though the chief Character of his Poetry was a kind of moving and softning Sweetness, yet he could upon Occasion dip his Pen in Gall,
and

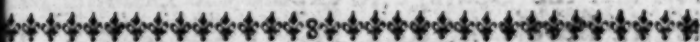
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and write the most bitter and piercing Invektive. One *Timoleon* it seems was his Enemy, and wrote a Comedy which reflected upon *Simonides*; but he came not off with Impunity, for our Poet lashed him severely, and among other cutting Strokes, he wrote his Epitaph.

Πολλὰ φαγὼν, ἔσθ.

After I had eaten and drunken plentifully, and spoken a great deal of ill of Men, here I lie, *Timoleon* of Rhodes.

THE Poetical Genius of this Poet was so strong and lasting, that he disputed the Prize of Poetry at eighty Years of Age.



ARISTOPHANES,

A Famous Comick Poet, but of his Country nothing is certain, some say he was an *Athenian*, others a *Rhodian*, and some an *Egyptian*; the most probable Conjecture is, that he was born at *Ægina*, or at least that he had an Estate in that Island; when he came to *Athens* he was summoned before the Magistracy, and accused for assuming the Privileges and Rights of an *Athenian* Citizen without a Freedom; he defended himself by saying one *Philip* an *Athenian* was his Father, and repeating two Verses of *Homer*,

Μήτηρ μὲν τ' ἐμὲ, Φησί, ἔσθ.

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Μήτηρ μὲν τ' ἐμὲ, Φησὶ, ἔς.

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*My Mother told me so ; 'twas he she said,
I know not ; and, pray, who has more to plead ?*

This Answer satisfied the Court, and he was admitted a Denizen without further Difficulty. The time of his Birth is not liable to the same Uncertainty ; he was Cotemporary with *Sophocles* the Tragic Poet, and flourished between the eighty fifth and ninety first Olympiad.

BEING received into the Freedom of *Athens*, he professed himself an Enemy to Tyranny and Corruption, and reformed the Government more by his Comedies, than if he had sat at the Head of the Council, and had the Reins of Power at full length in his own Hands. He represented the Vices of the chief Citizens upon the Stage, and had the Courage to expose the Leading Men to the People in their proper Characters. He openly censured the perverting of Justice in the People, and was not afraid to attack the publick Worship of the Gods and the National Superstition, without dreading the Resentment which *Æschylus* and *Euripides* had suffer'd before upon the same Occasion. Indeed, his Works, which Time has preserved to us, are a valuable Set of pertinent Reflections upon the Government of the *Athenian* State through the whole Course of the *Peloponnesian* War.

THIS fair Side of his Character does not conceal the Blemishes that lie upon his Good-nature, if not upon his Honesty, by the professed Hatred he bore to *Soerates* and *Euripides*, two of the greatest Men in the Commonwealth of *Athens*: One *Anytus*, it seems, with other Citizens engaged in a Design against the Life and Reputation of *Socrates*, but considering that he

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Credit was so great with the Magistrates and the People upon the account of his many excellent Qualities, that they feared to bring him to a fair Trial; they chose to attack him by slanderous and vile Aspersions, to represent him as a ridiculous idle Person, as a silly weak Arguer that would dispute on both sides the Question, and turn things inside out as he pleased; but particularly, as one that despised the Gods and the establish'd Worship, and would introduce strange Doctrines and Innovations in Religion. For this purpose they bribed *Aristophanes* with a Sum of Money, to dress up the great *Socrates* in a Fool's Coat in one of his Plays, which he did, and for that purpose wrote his Comedy of *The Clouds*. But when it came to be performed upon the Stage, the People were surpris'd to see the Philosopher treated with that Indignity, and at the first acting scorn'd the Representation; but upon the second appearing, the People naturally envious of Men of superior Learning and Worth, were tickled at the Fancy, and bestow'd the Prize upon the Writer with general Consent. This Story is told by *Ælian*, but his Authority is disputed, and there are reasons to believe that the Comedy of the *Clouds* was acted but once upon the *Athenian* Stage. Besides, *Charpentier* in the Life of *Socrates* observes, that *Aristophanes* compos'd the Play of the *Clouds*, because *Archelaus*, King of *Macedon*, had a better Opinion of that Philosopher than of himself.

EURIPIDES was call'd the *Philosophical Poet*; and the Rules and Discipline of the old Philosophy were exceeding strict, and quite contrary to the Licentiousness of the old Comedy, of which *Aristophanes* was the chief Writer, as *Menander*.

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nander of the new ; this seems to be a chief Reason of the Hatred of this Comick Writer to *Euripides*. Besides, *Socrates* never cared to be present in the *Athenian* Theatre, but to hear some Performance of that Tragedian, which without doubt increased the Enmity. *Aristophanes* in the Comedy of the *Frogs*, supposes that *Bacchus* putting a Verse of *Euripides* into the Scales against a Verse of *Æschylus*, always found that of *Æschylus* to weigh most.

THERE is no account of the Time or Place of *Aristophanes*'s Death, but he is supposed to have lived to a very great Age ; *Plato* his great Friend and Admirer composed an Honorary Dyftich to his Memory, which may serve for an Epitaph.

Αἱ Χάριτες, &c.

*The Graces sought a Shrine for ever whole,
So pitch'd on Aristophanes's Soul.*

OF fifty four Comedies which he wrote, according to *Suidas*, we have now but eleven left.

THE *Grecian* Comedy was usually divided into the *Old*, the *Middle*, and the *New* : The first exposed the Vices of the greatest Persons by Name, and without Disguise ; this licentious Way of Writing is condemn'd by *Horace* in his Art of Poetry,

—— *In vitium Libertas excidit, &c.*

THIS old Comedy was cultivated by *Eupolis* and *Cratinus* ; *Cratinus* first introduced three Persons and methodized this Poem ; he chastised the Bad, and mixed what was useful and agreeable together. This Licentiousness and open
Raillery

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Raillery of the Stage was stopped by a Law enacted when the thirty Tyrants governed *Athens*. Next came in the *Middle Comedy* which censured and lashed real Vices under fictitious Names. The *New Comedy* reformed the Stage into Civility and Good Manners, and obliged the Poet to make use of feigned Actions, and imaginary Names, without any particular Reflections; he was to exhibit only a probable Description of Human Life.

ARISTOPHANES succeeded *Cratinus* in the *Old Comedy*; for though *Cratinus* had much improved Comedy by distinguishing the Parts, disposing the Acts, and increasing the Number of Actors, yet Comedy wanted the Perfection which it afterwards received from *Aristophanes*: for whereas *Eupolis* studied to delight, *Cratinus* to be satirical, *Aristophanes* pursued a Medium, and he was not so bitter as *Cratinus*, yet he was as vehement against Delinquents. *Cratinus* was sharp, and appeared with a naked Sword; *Eupolis* weighty and agreeable in his bitterness from the Novelty of his fictitious Persons, but *Aristophanes* was facetiously stinging, and as he was naturally choleric and bold, and a professed Enemy to Servitude, and all who endeavour'd the Oppression of their Country, the Times he lived in afforded ample Matter to exert his Wit, and express his Affections for his Country. The *Athenians* were then governed by Persons who had no other design but to enslave the publick Liberty; *Aristophanes* was soon sensible of this, and like a generous Patriot, exposed those Delinquents upon the open Stage. *Cleon* Tribune of the People, a powerful Villain, of a turbulent Spirit, and injurious to the City, first felt his Satire:
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In his Comedy termed *Hippeis*, the Poet himself acted the Person of *Cleon*, (when every one of the common Players declined so dangerous a Part;) and in a most artful Manner exposed his Cruelty and Abuse of the State. *Cleon* was condemned to pay a Mulct of five Talents to the Poet.

NOR did his Industry only lead him to secure the State from the Magistrates at home, but he was as watchful against the Enemy abroad: The *Lacedæmonians*, and others who were jealous of the *Athenian* Grandeur, looked upon *Aristophanes* as an Army to the *Athenians*, and thought it impossible to accomplish their Ends, whilst his Counsels were pursued, for he had made the Stage a School of Politics, and Military Arts: He did not flatter his Auditory, but endeavoured to be instructive by most witty Inventions. His Comedies have been esteemed an exact History of *Athens*. This made *Plato* recommend them to *Dionysius*, King of *Syracuse*, who was desirous of understanding the *Greek* Tongue, and the Maxims of the *Athenian* State. This Poet has been justly condemned by the Learned, particularly *Cicero*, for traducing the greatest Men of his Age, as *Pericles*, *Alcibiades*, *Socrates*, *Euripides*, and the most eminent Personages in the Commonwealth.

AFTER, the immoderate Liberty of the Stage was suppress'd, and the Poets suffer'd for their Abuses, particularly *Eupolis*, who was drowned by *Alcibiades* for his Play termed *Dipper*, the *Chorus* most concerned in these Raileries was silenced, and the *Parabasis* or Digressions introduced. The Digressions contained Reflections on the Diction or Composition of the Poets, or in a general manner

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her glanced at the Vices of the Citizens without mentioning Names; or if the Names were intended, it was under Disguise, and this is the Origin of *middle Comedy*. In the Reign of *Alexander the Great*, there was a Law made, that a Suspicion of Scandal was actionable, though no Name was mentioned. This entirely suppressed the Licentiousness of the Stage, and gave Birth to *new Comedy*, where the Persons are fictitious, and the Prologue supplies the place of the *Chorus*. *Philemon* and *Menander* excelled in this kind of Comedy. *Frischlinus* in his Life of *Aristophanes* is of Opinion, that the *Plutus* of this Poet was composed after the first Edict of the States. His *Cocalus*, where there is only a Prologue and no *Chorus*, is of the kind of *new Comedy*, as *Vossius* and *Frischlinus* observe. Thus, says *Vossius*, Comedy, which at first was nothing but a *Chorus* without Actors, was made to consist of a Number of Actors without any *Chorus*.

NEW Comedy differ'd much from the *old*, particularly *old Comedy* made use of various kinds of Verse, the *new* used only *Iambics*, and *Trochaics*. The *new* was more elegant and equal in its Style, the Diction of the *old* more grand, and the Style less equal. This was what with other Things, says *Vossius*, made *Plutarch* prefer *Menander's* Diction so much to *Aristophanes's*. *Plutarch* condemns this Poet for his unequal Style, Obscurity of Diction, for being malepert, loquacious, trifling, arrogant, and haughty, and for observing no Decorum, for making his Persons speak only what occurred to him, so that we cannot distinguish from the Style, whether the Father or the Son, a Rustic or

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or a Deity be discoursing. But, says *Plutarch*, *Menander's* Diction was agreeable to the Condition, Age and Nature of every Person, and incredibly persuasive. The Theatre was always full of the Learned when his Plays were acted, and they were a Relaxation to the Philosophers of their intense and deep Meditations. *Menander's* Jests were sacred, *Aristophanes's* bitter and rough, and of a biting, sharp, and galling Force. He corrupted his Meditations in constituting a malicious, and not a civil Craft, and in making his Rustics foolish, and not circumspect, his Amours impure and not agreeable, and his Jests such as should be laughed at, rather than excite Laughter.

It must be confessed, there are many Things scurrilous, obscene, and sordid in *Aristophanes*; but those that plead for him, particularly *Frischlinus*, say he has many things grave and good, and that the Faults laid to his charge do not occur in all his Comedies, but only in some, and that seldom, and therefore the whole of his Poetry is not to be condemned. His Characters, they plead, are conformable to the Persons of the *Drama*, which are often dishonest Servants, avaritious old Men, libidinous Women, and the like, so that the Poet was obliged to represent his Persons such as they really were; and the reason why he characterizes such Persons, was to comply with the Humour of the Age, which relished nothing else. Thus the End excuses him, because Mirth and Joy was the only Scope of *Greek* Comedy. Another Plea for these Characters, is the Correction of Vice by ridiculing and exposing the Vicious, and therefore he did nothing unbecoming a Comedian in his Imitation

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tion of such Persons. The Odes of his *Chorus* have indeed something of Tragedy in them, because the Gods and Goddesses are here invoked; and indeed, he sometimes affects à Tragical instead of a Comic Style, which *Horace*, the most exact Reformer of the Stage, sometimes allows.

Versibus exponi tragicis, &c.

A Comic Story hates a Tragic Style.

RAPIN, the *French* Critic, aggravates whatever has been said against the Character of this *Greek* Poet: He is peevish in his Censures of him, and resolves to give him no Quarter; *Aristophanes*, says he, is not exact in the Contrivance of his Fables, nor are his Fictions very probable. He mocks Persons too grossly and too openly. *Socrates*, whom he plays upon so eagerly in his Comedies, had a more delicate Air of Raillery than he, but was not so shameless. It is true, he goes on, *Aristophanes* writ during the Disorder and Licentiousness of the old Comedy, and understood the Humour of the *Athenian* People, who were easily disgusted with the Merit of extraordinary Persons, whom he set his Wit to abuse, that he might please that People. After all, he is no otherwise pleasant than by his Buffoonry. That *Ragoust*, composed of seventy six Syllables in the last Scene of his Comedy, the *Ecclesiastousai*, would not go down with us in our Age. His Language is often obscure, low, and trivial; and his frequent jingling upon Words, his Contradictions of opposite Terms each to other; the Hotch-potch of his Style of Tragick and Comick, of Serious and Buffoon, of Grave and Familiar, is unseemly, and his Witticisms

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Witticisms often, when well examined, prove false.

THIS Reflection upon the Writings of *Aristophanes*, is a piece of false Criticism, and highly injurious to the Character of this *Greek* Poet; but the Bitterness of it is taken off by the Opinion of better Judges, particularly by a Gentlewoman of the same Nation. Mrs. *Le Fevre* in the Preface to her Edition of *Aristophanes*, remarks that many excellent Instructions are to be found in this Author, of great use to the Politician and the Soldier. He assembled the Spectators, says she, not to fawn upon them and flatter them, or to divert them with Buffoonry and Fooleries, but to give them solid Advice, which he knew how to make them relish by seasoning it with a thousand pleasant Inventions, which nobody but himself was able to do. Never any Man had better Skill in discerning the ridiculous Part, nor a Turn more ingenious to make it appear: His Criticks are natural and easy, and, which does not often happen, notwithstanding he is so copious, he still sustains the Delicacy of his Character. She adds, that the *Attick* Spirit, which the Ancients so much boasted of, appears more in *Aristophanes*, than in any other Author of Antiquity; but what is most to be admired in him, is, that he is always so absolute a Master of the Matter he treats of, that with all the Ease imaginable, he finds a Way how to make those very things which at first might appear the most remote from his Subject, fall in naturally; and that even his most lively and least expected Caprices, seem'd but as the natural Results of those Incidents he had prepared. Nothing, as she further tells us, can be more ingenious than

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the whole Contexture of the Comedy called *The Clouds*; and what she most admires, is, that the Poet has so well hit the Air and Humour of *Socrates* in the ridiculous Part, which is done so naturally, that a Man would really think he heard *Socrates* himself speak: She was so much charm'd with this Piece, that after she had translated it, and had read it two hundred times over, she did not find herself in the least cloy'd, which was more than she would say of any other Piece. The Style of *Aristophanes*, she concludes, is as agreeable as his Wit; for besides its Purity, Force, and Sweetness, it has a certain Harmony which sounds so pleasant to the Ear, that the very reading him is extremely delightful: When he has occasion to use the common ordinary Style, he does it without using any Expression that is base and vulgar, and when he has a mind to express himself loftily, in his highest Flight he is never obscure. He was reputed, says *Gyraldus*, the most Eloquent of all the *Athenians*, who look'd upon him the most considerable of their *Beaux Esprits*; he abounds with fine curious Sentences; there is in his Invention a Variety that is surprizing, but yet agreeable; he understood how to give every thing its Turn, which gave him the Preference above all the other Comic Poets. Let no Man, says *Scaliger*, pretend to understand the *Attick* Dialect, that has not *Aristophanes* at his Fingers Ends; in him are to be found all the *Attick* Ornaments, which made *St. Chrysostome* so much admire him, that he always laid him under his Pillow, when he went to sleep.

It has been observed before, that *Aristophanes* professed himself upon all Occasions, a
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zealous Champion for publick Liberty, but Mr. *Rimer* has enter'd more particularly into that part of his Character. He was, says he, a Man of wonderful Zeal for Virtue, and the Good of his Country; he laid about him with an undaunted Resolution, as it were some Christian Martyr for his Faith and Religion. He plainly ran a muck at all manner of Vice, wherever he saw it, were it in the greatest Philosophers, the greatest Poets, the Generals or Ministers of State. The *Persian* Embassador was surpris'd to observe the *Athenian* Government, Turning out, Disgracing, Impeaching, Banishing, Outlawing, and Attainting the Great Men, as the Poet hinted or held up his Finger; not understanding the *Athenian* Temper, he was astonish'd at the Man. And for all the *Democracy*, no less bold was he with his *Sovereign Legislative People*, representing them taking Bribes, selling their Votes, bought off. He tells them, that the Government had no occasion for Men of *Wit* or *Honesty*; the most ignorant, the most impudent, and the greatest Rogue, stood fairest for a Place, and was the best qualified to be their Chief Minister. He tells them nothing shall fright him; Truth and Honesty are on his side, he has the Heart of *Hercules*, will speak what is just and generous, tho' *Cerberus*, and all the Kennel of Hell-hounds were loo'd upon him: But then, says *Rimer*, his Address was admirable, he would make the Truth visible and palpable, and every way sensible to them. The Art and the Application, his strange Fetches, his lucky Stars, his odd Inventions, the wild Turns, Returns, and Counter-turns, were never match'd, nor are ever to be reach'd again.

T H E O.



THEOCRITUS,

A Sicilian Poet born at *Syracuse*; he flourished about the hundred and twenty third Olympiad. Of what Family, or of what Condition his Parents were, is uncertain, their Names only remain; his Father was *Praxagoras*, and his Mother *Philina*. We are told this by an Epigram usually placed in the Front of his Poem,

"Αλλος ὁ Χίος, ἔειπε.

*I'm not of Chios, but I do declare,
I breathed first the Syracusan Air,
Son of Praxagoras and fam'd Philina,
And 'tis my own Muse dictates what I say.*

THERE are two *Idylliums* of his remaining that adjust his Age, inscribed to *Hiero* King of *Syracuse*, and to *Ptolemy Philadelphus* King of *Egypt*. The Exploits of this *Hiero* are recorded to Advantage by *Polybius* in the first Book of his History; and though he was a Prince of signal Courage and Renown, and distinguish'd himself by extraordinary Atchievements in War, yet he seems to have had no great Value for Learning or learned Men. *Theocritus* complains of this in his sixteenth *Idyllium*; and upon this account it is supposed he left *Syracuse*, and applied

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applied himself to the *Egyptian* Court, where, as it appears by his seventeenth *Idyllium*, he met with honourable Encouragement and Protection.

NOTHING more is recorded of the Life of this Poet: If we believe *Ovid*, he was put to a violent Death by *Hiero*, King of *Sicily*, for reflecting upon him in his Writings.

*Utque Syracusio præstrictâ fauce Poetæ
Sic animæ laqueo sit via clausa tuæ.*

THE Compositions of this Poet are distinguished by the Antients by the Name of *Idylliums*, which Title they obtained to express the smallness and variety of their Natures; they would now be called *Miscellanies* or *Poems upon several Occasions*. The nine first and the eleventh are confessed to be true Pastorals; several of the others are Copies directed to particular Friends, and written on particular Accounts. He has composed in several sorts of Poetry, and succeeded in all. The native Simplicity and easy Freedom of his Pastorals are inimitable. *Virgil* himself sometimes invokes the Muse of *Syracuse*, when he imitates him through all his own Poems of that kind, and in several Passages translates him.

*Prima Syracusio dignata est ludere Versu,
Nostra nec erubuit sylvas habitare Thalia.*

QUINTILIAN allows him to be admirable in his kind, but when he adds, that his Muse is not only shy of appearing at the Bar, but in the City too, 'tis evident this Remark must be confined to his Pastorals. In several of his other Poems, he shews such Strength of Reason and Politeness

Politeness, that would qualify him to plead among the Orators, and make him acceptable in the Courts of Princes. In his smaller Poems of *Cupid* stung, *Adonis* killed by the Boar, and others, you have the Vigor and Delicacy of *Anacreon*; in his *Hylas* and Combat of *Pollux* and *Amycus*, he is much more pathetic, clear and pleasant than *Apollonius* on the same, or any other Subject. In his Conversation of *Alcmena* and *Tiresias*, of *Hercules*, and the old Servant of *Augeas*, in *Cynisca* and *Thyonichus*, and the Women going to the Ceremonies of *Adonis*, there is all the easiness and engaging Familiarity of Humour and Dialogue which reign in the *Odysses*; and in *Hercules* destroying the Lion of *Nemea*, the Spirit and Majesty of the *Iliad*. The Panegyric upon King *Ptolemy* is justly esteemed an Original and Model of Perfection in that way of writing. Both in that excellent Poem, and the noble Hymn upon *Castor* and *Pollux*, he has praised his Gods and his Hero with that Delicacy and Dexterity of Address, with those sublime and graceful Expressions of Devotion and Respect, that in Politeness, Smoothness of Turn, and a refined Art of praising without Offence or Appearance of Flattery, he has equalled *Callimachus*, and in Loftiness and Flight of Thought scarce yields to *Pindar* or *Homer*.

THE Eclogue is the most considerable of the little Poems, it is an Image of the Life of Shepherds; therefore the Matter is low, and nothing great is in the Genius of it; its business is to describe the Loves, the Sports, the Piques, the Jealousies, the Disputes, the Quarrels, the Intrigues, the Passions, the Adventures, and all the little Affairs of Shepherds. So that the Character

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racter must be simple, the Wit easy, the Expression common; it must have nothing that is exquisite, neither in the Thoughts, nor in the Words, nor in any Fashions of Speech. The true Character of the Eclogue is Simplicity and Modesty; its Figures are sweet; the Passions tender, the Motions easy, and though sometimes it may be passionate, and have little Transports, and little Despairs, yet it never rises so high as to be fierce or violent; its Narrations are short, Descriptions little, the Thoughts ingenious, the Manners innocent, the Language pure, the Verse flowing, the Expressions plain, and all the Discourse natural, for this is not a great Talker that loves to make a noise. The Models to be proposed to write well in this sort of Poesy are *Theocritus* and *Virgil*. *Theocritus* is more sweet, more natural, more delicate by the Character of the *Greek* Tongue. *Virgil* is more judicious, more exact, more regular, more modest by the Character of his own Wit, and by the Genius of the *Latin* Tongue. *Theocritus* hath more of all the Graces that make the ordinary Beauty of Poetry; *Virgil* has more of good Sense, more Vigor, more Nobleness, more Modesty. After all, *Theocritus* is the Original, *Virgil* is only the Copy, though some things he hath copied so happily, that they equal the Original in many places. *Manilius* in his second Book gives us a just Character of this Poet:

*The sweet Theocritus with softest Strains,
Makes piping Pan delight Sicilian Swains;
Thro' his smooth Reed no rustick Numbers move,
But all is Tenderness, and all is Love,
As if the Muses sate in every Vale,
Inspir'd the Song, and told the melting Tale.*

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THOUGH *Theocritus* was not the first Inventor of the *Bucolick* Verse, yet he is allowed to be the first that brought it to Perfection: That which distinguishes him, says *Dryden*, from all other Poets both *Greek* and *Latin*, and which raises him even above *Virgil* in his *Eclogues*, is the inimitable Tenderness of his Passions, and the natural Expression of them in Words so becoming of a Pastoral. A Simplicity shines thro' all he writes; he shews his Art and Learning by disguising both. His Shepherds never rise above their Country Education in their Complaints of Love. There is the same difference betwixt him and *Virgil*, as there is betwixt *Tasso's Aminta*, and the *Pastor Fido* of *Guarini*; *Virgil's* Shepherds are too well read in the Philosophy of *Epicurus* and *Plato*, and *Guarini's* seem to have been bred in Courts. But *Theocritus* and *Tasso* have taken theirs from Cottages and Plains: It was said of *Tasso* in relation to his Similitudes, *Mai esce del Bosco*; that he never departed from the Woods, that is, all his Comparisons were taken from the Country. The same may be said of *Theocritus*; he is softer than *Ovid*, he touches the Passions more delicately, and performs all this out of his own Fund, without diving into the Arts and Sciences for a Supply. Even his *Dorick* Dialect has an incomparable Sweetness in its Clownishness, like a fair Shepherdess in her Country Russet, talking in a *Yorkshire* Tone. This was impossible for *Virgil* to imitate, because the Severity of the *Roman* Language denied him that Advantage. *Spencer* has endeavour'd it in his *Shepherd's Calendar*, but it can never succeed in the *English* Language.

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Fontenelle would give us a different Idea of this Poet ; sometimes these Shepherds are too exalted in their Strains, as when they speak thus ;

*Gods, when she view'd how strong was the Surprise !
Her Soul took fire and sparkled through her Eyes ;
How did her Passions, how her Fury move !
How soon she plung'd into th' Abyss of Love !*

THESE Sentiments are very natural to the Passions of Love. Fontenelle is very difficult ; Theocritus can neither please him with his Delicacy, nor with his Rusticity ; for after this, he complains that Theocritus lets his Shepherds fall as much too low, as before they were raised too high above their native Genius. The Imitations in this Poet are very natural and just ; and he that imitates Nature in the rough is no less a Poet, than he who imitates Nature when she is polished, and in her greatest Perfection.



LYCOPHRON



L Y C O P H R O N.

THIS Writer flourished in the Reign of the great Patron of Learning, *Ptolemy Philadelphus* King of *Egypt*, who retained him with *Theocritus*, *Callimachus*, and the most eminent Poets of the Age, encouraged them by his Munificence and Princely Favours, and esteemed them among the chief Favourites of his Court. His Love to Poetry advanced him to a Star in the poetical *Pleias*, which shone with so much Lustre in that Reign. There is little left to Posterity, to collect concerning the Life and Writings of *Lycophron*: We are informed only, that he was born at the City of *Chalcis* in *Eubæa*; his Father was *Socelus*, by profession a Grammarian, who took all possible care of his Education, but dying, he left his Son young, who by good Fortune fell into worthy Hands, and was adopted by *Lycus* the Historiographer. The Works of his that remain, give us reason not to doubt of his Proficiency; his Industry, and Application to Learning, and his Accomplishments in the Arts and Sciences, could not be concealed, they were soon observed, and, without doubt, recommended him to the Favour of the *Egyptian* Court. There it is supposed he spent the greatest number of his Days; the time of his Death is uncertain, we have some account of the Manner, for we are told by *Ovid*, that he died by the Point of an Arrow.

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*Utque cothurnatum periisse Lycophrona narrant,
Sic animæ laqueo sit via clausa tuæ.* In Ibin.

LYCOPHRON was the Author of many Works, he wrote some Things in Prose, particularly Essays upon Criticism; but his Genius led him chiefly to Poetry, in all kinds of which he is said to have excelled from the Loftiness of Tragedy, (of which he wrote twelve, whose Names are mentioned by *Suidas*) to the humble Spirit of Anagram, which lays claim to the honour of his Invention. The voluminous Writings of this Poet, have perished by the Teeth of Time, except one Piece, his *Cassandra*, or his *Raving Lady*, which has reached the present Age.

THE Story of this unhappy Princess is well known and commonly told in this manner. *Cassandra* was the Daughter of *Priamus*, King of *Troy*, beloved by *Apollo*, who finding her not at all affected by his Courtship, but coy and inflexible, resolved at all Events to satisfy his Desires, and to influence her Love, and engage her Compliance, promised her the Gift of Prophecy and Divination. She first got possession of the Reward, but then refused to answer the Terms upon which it was granted, and would by no means receive his Embraces. This so enraged his Godship, that he resolved to revenge the Injury, and so ordered it that tho' she foretold Truth, she was never to be believed. Accordingly she was so far from being credited, that her Predictions were despised and laughed at, when she foretold the Misfortunes that were to fall upon her Country; her Inspiration therefore proved

a desperate Torment and Affliction to her, instead of a divine Favour.

THIS Fable is the Foundation of *Lycophron's* Piece. *Cassandra*, or, as she was otherwise called, *Alexandra*, is supposed to be shut up in a close Tower, as well to keep her from frightening the People, as to try whether the solitary Confinement might not bring her to her right Senses. During this restraint, her superstitious old Father commands the Keeper to come and bring him a punctual Account of all that the Princess had said under her Fit. This Recital made by the Keeper, is the *Form* of the Poem. He begins with a Promise of Faithfulness, and having hinted to the King how different a Manner of Speech she had now used from her common Strain, appearing a meer *Sphinx*, and affecting the darkest and most perplexed Thought and Expression; he then goes on to repeat her whole intricate Speech to the King. In which beginning at the Voyage of *Paris*, who was then sailed for *Sparta*, on his amorous Expedition, she throws out in a most miserable Rant a Prediction of all the Calamities which should be occasioned by this Adventure: The Miseries of the ten years Siege of *Troy*, and the no less strange Disasters that should happen as well to the returning Victors, as to the dispersed Remains of the common People. At last she inquires into the original Cause of the Quarrel between *Europe* and *Asia*, and having described the stealing away of *Europa*, the Voyage of the *Argonauts*, and the other famous old Contentions, she looks forward to the Design of *Xerxes* against *Greece*; and having reached the Times succeeding *Alexander* the Great, she there breaks

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off upon a sudden remembrance, that no body will at present believe her. And then the Keeper with a short Epilogue to the King, concludes the Poem, which is a kind of tragick *Monody*, or Narrative of a single Person.

LYCOPHRON is condemn'd as a Writer unpleasant and almost unintelligible, and therefore is called, the *muddy* or *mysterious*; but it must be consider'd, that the Nature of his Subject led him into an obscure Style, and into a Darknes of Expression strange and frantick. But whoever blames this Writer for the Rashness of his Design, cannot fail to applaud him for the Greatness of his Success. In drawing the Image of common Madness, it is enough to be handsomely absurd. But when the Phrenzy is supposed to be divine, and the Fit to proceed from a miraculous Transport, then there must be a dark Consistency of Speech, as well as an appearing Distraction. There must be the obscure Certainty, as well as the open Fury of an Oracle. And what could better answer such a Project, than to join in one wild Discourse almost all the Terms, and almost all the Adventures, of the most copious Language, and of the most copious History in the World.

IF we would add to this, the Liveliness of the transporting Passion, and the artificial Strangeness of the Digressions, it will not be honour enough to fix this Piece, as the best Epitome of the *Grecian* Tongue, and of the *Grecian* Fables; but *Lycophron* will maintain his Seat in the Constellation of Poets, however some late Criticks have attempted to degrade him, and pull him from his Sphere. And tho' we should suppose that he formerly made but a dark Figure

Figure in that Station, yet the cloudy Spots are now happily removed, the Riddles and Mysteries are explained, and *Cassandra* is at last come into Credit and Esteem.

THIS Greek Writer, in his *Cassandra*, gives an Account of the Manner of *Hercules's* Death, which I think is to be found in no other Author. He says, that he was devoured by a Sea-Dog, named *Carcharias*, whom *Neptune* had sent against him. And the Scholiast of *Lycophron* tells us, that this great Fish being ready to swallow *Hesione*, the Daughter of *Laomedon*, *Hercules* advanced, and threw himself armed into the Mouth of the Monster; and having torn his Entrails, he got out of his Belly, having left nothing but his Hair, and that from hence *Hercules* was called *Τρίσπερος*, because he was three Nights in the Belly of the Monster. *Theophylact* mentions this Fable, and applies it to *Jonas*, swallowed by a Whale.



CALLIMACHUS,

A Famous Greek Poet, born in *Cyrene*, a Town of *Africa*; he is frequently distinguished by the Title of *Battiades*, which gave occasion to conclude, that he was the Son of one *Battus*; but the Name is with more reason assumed from *Battus*, King and Founder of *Cyrene*, from whom *Strabo* says he declared him-

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self descended. Tho' it is difficult to fix the time of his Birth, yet it is certain he was one of the seven celebrated Poets, who were entertained in the Court of *Ptolemy Philadelphus* King of *Egypt*, with whom he was in principal Esteem. His Father placed him under the care of *Hermocrates*, the Grammarian; and whatever his Father's Name was, he acknowledg'd the Obligation he had received from him, by a handsome Epitaph, to be found in the *Anthologia*, and which is a Confirmation of *Martial's* Judgment, who places *Callimachus* at the head of the *Greek* Writers of Epigram. The Father is supposed thus to address himself to those, who visit his Tomb:

*Οστις ἐμὸν, &c.

*Stranger! I beg not to be known, but thus,
Father and Son of a Callimachus.
Chief of a War, the first enlarg'd his Name,
And the last sung, what Envy ne'er shall damn;
For whom the heavenly Muse admir'd a Child,
On his gray Hairs the Goddess always smil'd.*

He taught Grammar in *Egypt* with much Reputation, before he appeared at Court; among his other Disciples, *Apollonius Rhodius*, Author of the *Argonauticks*, was one, who having proved ungrateful, and behav'd disrespectfully to his Master, *Callimachus* resented the Indignity, and wrote a bitter Invective against him, which he called *Ibis* from the Name of a Bird in *Egypt*, which used to foul his Bill by cleansing his Breech; intimating that the Offence given him by his Scholar, was by foul Words and backbiting Speeches, and therefore he gave him

him this Name as a Badge of Contempt and Infamy, and to mark him out as a foul-mouth'd reviling Fellow. *Ovid* taking the Hint from hence, wrote a sharp Satire against a Person, who had used him with the same Treatment, and therefore in imitation of *Callimachus*, he distinguish'd him by the same Name. Tho' this *Apollonius* was called *Rhodium*, because he had lived long at *Rhodes*, yet he was not born there, but a Native of *Alexandria*, where he died; he was sent for from *Rhodes*, to take upon him the Office of Library-keeper to *Ptolemy Euergetes* King of *Egypt*.

THE Favour *Callimachus* received in the Court of *Ptolemy Philadelphus* was continued to him by *Ptolemy Euergetes* his Successor, in honour of whose Queen he wrote his Poem called *Coma Berenices*. The Foundation of this Fiction is thus related: When *Ptolemy Euergetes* went upon an Expedition into *Syria*, *Berenice* his Queen, out of the tender regard she had for him, and being concerned at the Danger, his Person might be exposed to in this War, made a Vow of consecrating her Hair, (in the Fineness of which, it seems, lay her chief Beauty) if he returned safe and unhurt. And therefore on his coming back again with Safety and full Success, she cut off her Hair to accomplish her Vow, and offered it up in the Temple, which *Ptolemy Philadelphus* had built to his beloved Wife *Arfinae*, on the Promontory of *Zephyrium* in *Cyprus*, by the Name of the *Zephyrian Venus*. But the consecrated Hair, being soon after lost, or perhaps contemptuously flung away by the Priests, which gave offence to *Ptolemy*, one *Canon of Samos*, a flattering Mathematician then at *Alexandria*, to

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salve up the Matter, and to ingratiate himself with the King, gave out, that this Hair was catch'd up into Heaven, and he there shewed seven Stars near the *Tail* of the *Lion*, not then taken within any Constellation, which he averr'd to be the *Queen's consecrated Hair*. This Conceit was very agreeable to the *Egyptian* Court, and the Flatterers that followed it; and other Astronomers agreeing in the Abuse for fear of disobliging the King, from hence it came that *Coma Berenices*, *Berenice's Hair* became one of the *Constellations*, and so continues to this day. *Callimachus*, who lived in these Times, took occasion to compose a fine Elegy upon the *Queen's Hair*, the Original of which is lost, but a Translation of it by *Catullus* remains still among the Poetical Works of that Writer. This Poem is commonly printed with the Works of *Tibullus* and *Propertius* in the same Strain, and may justly vie with the most exact of their Pieces; which justifies the Remark of *Quintilian*, who observes that *Callimachus* passed among the best and chiefest of their Elegiac Writers. *Propertius* makes choice of him for a Pattern, and thinks it the greatest Honour to have his Works esteemed in the same Rank with the Verses of this Poet.

*Inter Callimachi sat erit placuisse libellos,
Et cecinisse modis, Pure Poeta, tuis.*

*O may the Elegiac Strains of mine,
Poet correct, be ever sung with thine!*

CALLIMACHUS was a very voluminous Writer, his Excellency lay chiefly in small Compositions; but the Foundation of his Character among

among the Ancients, depended upon the numerous Pieces in the Elegiac Way. Of these we have only the Hymn on *Minerva's Bath*, and *Catullus's* Translation of the Copy on Queen *Berenice's* Hair. He composed, if we believe *Suidas*, above eight hundred Pieces; what remains of his, consisting of a few Hymns and Epigrams, was published some time ago by the ingenious *Mademoiselle le Fevre*, with Notes and Remarks full of solid Learning. This Lady had a very high Opinion of her Author. She says in the Preface to her Edition, that in all the Writings of the ancient *Greeks*, there never was any thing more elegant, nor more polite than the Works of *Callimachus*: Her Father *Tanaquil*, in his Lives of the *Greek* Poets, is of the same Judgment; he tells us, that the way that *Callimachus* took in composing his Verses, was both pure and masculine, that *Catullus* and *Propertius* did often imitate him, and that sometimes they stole from him. He was generally esteemed a very good Grammarian, says *Scaliger*, yet he affected the most obscure, antique, and improper Words, in many of his Poems. He was a most excellent Critick, and, as the best Judges agree, we cannot sufficiently deplore the loss of those many Pieces, he wrote in relation to that sort of Learning.

LE FEVRE lays himself out in the Praise of this Poet; he was, says he, one of the most learned Men in his Age, and it may be, we cannot easily find an Author, who has writ a greater number of Poems, though they were generally but small Pieces; for the Aversion he had to long and tedious Works, made him often say, That a great Book was a great Evil. But in this, he did
by

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by no means please the Criticks of that Age, who commonly thought, but with little reason, that Poets, like the Sea, should never be dry; and that to abound, was the best Quality of a Writer.

THERE have been Criticks in the last Ages, who would by no means allow that *Callimachus* ever had any great Genius for Poetry, and among many others we find *Vossius* in his *Arte Poetica* of this Opinion: It is probable, they might form their Judgment upon these Lines of *Ovid*;

*Battiades toto semper cantabitur Orbe,
Quamvis ingenio non valet, arte valet.*

*Callimachus's Praise shall never fail,
Who not by Wit, but does by Art prevail.*

So that upon the Faith of *Ovid*, they have taken it for granted, that this Poet does rather excel by Art and Labour, than by Wit and Spirit. But *Heinsius* in his Preface before *Hesiod*, explaining this place of *Ovid*, tells us, that when this Author seems to accuse *Callimachus* for not having had a Genius, his Meaning is, not that he wanted Invention, Subtilty, Address, or Wit, but only that he is not natural enough, that he is too elaborate, and has too much of Affectation, as if he thought it more Honour to be a good Grammarian, than to be a true Poet. And hence without doubt it was, that *Candidus Hesychius*, a late Author with that fictitious Name, observes, that *Callimachus*, finding that the Wind did not favour him, never durst venture into the open Sea, but always kept near the Shore, that so he might the more easily

easily get into Harbour; that is, he wanted a poetical Genius, which elevates a Poet, and therefore never cared to undertake a Work of too great a Length.

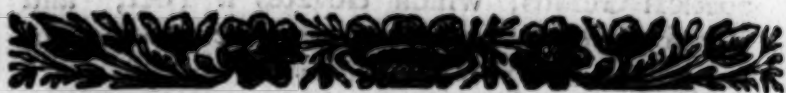
THIS very Objection, his envious Rivals made against him in his Life-time; they urged that his Muse made very short Flights, and would attempt nothing of Length or Consequence. He gave a very ingenious and sharp Reply to this Charge, at the end of the Hymn to *Apollo*, which seems to be composed and introduced with all that Art, which *Ovid* makes the great Excellency of *Callimachus*.

Ὁ Φθόλος Απόλλωνος, &c.

*Sly Envy in his Ear Apollo told,
He's poor that writes less than a Sea can hold:
Apollo spurn'd the Monster off, and said
See vast Euphrates how his Billows spread;
But see the Loads of Muck that press his Side,
And foul the Water while they raise the Tide.
But not with Liquor drawn at every Stream
Great Ceres' Maids regale their heavenly Dames:
But some untainted crystal Brook supplies
Its spotless Drops to purge the Sacrifice.*

THE Scholiast on this Place observes, that to stop the Mouths of these Detractors, the Poet composed his *Hecate*, a Work of a larger Size, now lost, but frequently cited by Greek and Roman Authors.

APOL



APOLLONIUS RHODIUS.

APOLLONIUS, the Son of *Sylleus*, was a Native of *Alexandria*, and born under the Reign of *Ptolemy Philadelphus* King of *Egypt*. He received his Education under *Callimachus*, but the Scholar proved so ungrateful, that the Master was obliged to lash him with a severe Satire, called *Ibis*. This Poet made his first Attempt upon a Subject the most remarkable in all Antiquity, the Expedition of the *Golden Fleece*; which he called *Argonautica*, and wrote in four Books. This Work he composed in his Youth, before his Judgment was mature and settled: He was sensibly convinced of his Mistakes, by the success his Poem met with from the Publick; when it was recited it was condemned as a rude and empty Performance. He was so affected by the Shame of this Disappointment, that he could not endure to pursue his Studies at *Alexandria*, but retired to *Rhodes*. Here he staid for some time, which he employed with great Diligence and Industry, and for his Support, he set up a School of Rhetorick. Upon this account, he was distinguished by the Name of *Rhodius*. Here it was that he corrected, and put his finishing Hand to his *Argonauticks*, and had the Pleasure upon its being publicly recited, to meet with universal Applause, and

was complimented with the Freedom of the City.

HE soon after returned to *Alexandria* (where he published his Poem) being sent for by *Ptolemy Evergetes* to succeed *Eratoſthenes* in the care of the publick Library. It is ſuppoſed, he died in this Office; and what is very remarkable, he was buried in the ſame Tomb with his Maſter *Callimachus*.

ARGONAUTÆ was the Name given to thoſe valiant *Grecians*, that accompanied *Jaſon* to *Colchus*, in his Expedition for the *Golden Fleece*; they were ſo called from the Ship *Argo*, in which they ſailed, built by *Argus*, with the help of *Minerva*, of the Pine-Trees in the Foreſt of *Peleus* or *Dodona*. The number of thoſe Adventurers were fifty two or fifty four, whereof *Hercules*, *Hylas*, *Theſeus*, *Pirithous*, *Orpheus*, *Peleus*, and *Telamon*, famous both in *Greek* and *Latin* Poets, were the chief. Some ſay theſe *Argonauts* ſailed to *Scythia*, and that the *Golden Fleece* was nothing but the vaſt Riches of that Country, the Inhabitants getting great quantity of Gold, in the Rivers that ran from, or by Mount *Caucasus*. And becauſe they made uſe of *Sheepskins* with the Wooll on, to take up this Metal in Powder, it gave occaſion to call them *Golden Fleeces*. Several Authors give different Explanations of this Fable, ſome ſaying, that the *Golden Fleece* ſignifies Virtue, and when Poets ſpeak of *Jaſon's* conquering Bulls that vomited Flames, they would represent by theſe furious Beaſts, our headſtrong and unruly Paſſions. Others ſay, that this Fable is a Leſſon of Chymiſtry, denoting by the ſeveral Paſſages of a tedious Voyage, the long and many Alterations of

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of Bodies, before they are brought to the Perfection meant by the *Golden Fleece*. *Suidas* thinks that famous Fleece was a Book of Sheepskins containing the Secret of the Transmutation, or Philosophers Stone; and that *Medea* stole it from her Father *Æetes*, King of *Colchos*, and gave it to her Lover *Jason*. In fine, according to the Opinion of several others, which seems the most reasonable, the *Golden Fleece* signifies Honour and Glory, and this Fable teaches young Men not to live idle in their own Country, when there is no Occasion to shew their Courage; if they can signalize themselves elsewhere; and that such as aspire to any considerable Place, or are called by their Birth or Parts to govern, should have seen several Countries to learn their Customs and Ways; and to make themselves known by their good Qualities, that so they might be the more esteemed by Strangers, with whom afterwards they have occasion to deal. For a fuller Account, I must refer to the Poem it self.

THE Criticks differ in their Sentiments, concerning the Abilities of *Apollonius*; *Quintilian* says, the *Argonautica* is no contemptible Work, that the Poet wrote *æquali quadam mediocritate*, he observed an exact Medium in his Style, neither too lofty nor too mean. *Longinus* is much of the same Opinion with *Quintilian*, he remarks, that the Poem of this Writer never rises too high, or falls too low, but that he poises himself very exactly; yet for all this good Quality, he thinks he falls infinitely short of *Homer*, take him with all his Faults, inasmuch as the sublime lofty Style, though subject to Unevennesses, is to be preferr'd to any other sort. *Gyraldus* speaking of this Poem, commends it

APOLLONIUS RHODIUS. 139

as a very laborious Piece, and a Work full of Variety ; but yet owns that in some places, it is rough and unpleasant, but not where he describes the Amours of *Medea*, for even there *Virgil* thinks him so transcendent, that he has copied many Things from thence, inserting them into the Amours of *Dido*. *Le Fevre* agrees with *Gyraldus*, in what he remarks of *Virgil*, but can by no means comply with the Opinion of *Longinus*, who thinks no Man could find fault with the Oeconomy of the Work. He laughs also at those Criticks, who judge the Style of *Apollonius* to be so very equal, soft and easy, saying, that he could never be brought to be of their Opinion ; for as little as he understood *Greek*, he thought he could discern a remarkable Difference of Characters. *Apollonius* is very low in Credit with *Rapin* the French Critick, who remarks that the Expedition of the *Argonauts* is of a slender Character, and has nothing of that Nobleness of Expression which *Hommer* has ; that the Fable is ill invented, and the List of the *Argonauts* in the first Book flat. It is certain, that this Poet has not the Happiness to be ranked among the old Masters of *Epick* Verse ; and one great Reason of his Disappointment, must needs be the Advantage *Ovid* has had of him, in touching upon the same Adventure.

23

ARATUS.



A R A T U S,

AN eminent Poet born at *Soli*, or *Siloe*, a Town of Note in *Cilicia*, founded by the wise *Solon*; it afterwards changed its Name, and was called *Pompeiopolis*, in honour of *Pompey the Great*. He flourished about the hundred and twenty sixth Olympiad under the Reign of *Ptolemy Philadelphus* King of *Egypt*. The Name of his Father was *Athenodorus*, his Mother was called *Letophila*. He discovered in his Youth a remarkable Pregnancy of Wit, and Capacity for Improvement, and for the benefit of his Education, was placed under the care of *Dionysius* of *Heraclea*, a *Stoick* Philosopher; he espoused the Principles of that Sect, and his poetic Performances are fixed and established upon that Foundation.

It is said, that *Aratus* was Physician to *Antigonus Gonatus*, the Son of *Demetrius Polyorces*, King of *Macedon*. This Prince was a singular Encourager of learned Men, sent for this Writer to his Court, admitted him into his highest Intimacy, and encouraged him in his Studies. He had entertained that Opinion of his Abilities, that he thought he could write well upon any Subject, which 'tis supposed gave Occasion to a common Story, that *Antigonus*,
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for the sake of a Jest, commanded this Poet to write upon the Image, Figure, Rising and Setting of the celestial Sphere, tho' he was a professed Physician at the same time, and knew little or nothing of the Nature and Motion of the heavenly Bodies; and order'd at the same time *Nicander*, a noted Astronomer, to write upon Physick: But this Story is inconsistent with Chronology, for these two Writers were so far from being Contemporaries, that they lived at the distance of many Olympiads. *Cicero* seems to give some Foundation to this Report, in his Book of Oratory, where he says, that *Aratus* acquitted himself excellently upon the Subject of Astrology, tho' he knew nothing of the heavenly Bodies; and that *Nicander* wrote well upon Husbandry, tho' he was a stranger to Ploughing and Sowing, and the Methods of Pasture and Tillage.

THE Poem of his which remains, consists of two Parts, his *Phænomena*, which is properly Astronomical, and elegantly describes the Nature and the Motion of the Stars; and his *Diosemia*, which is Astrological, and shews the particular Influences of the heavenly Bodies, their various Dispositions and Relations. His poetic Genius had no low Esteem, when he was encouraged to correct the many Errors and Corruptions that had in time crept into *Homer's* *Odyssey*, and was sent for by *Antiochus* King of *Syria*, to bestow his Criticisms and Emendations upon the *Iliad*.

ARATUS received as much Honour by the Acquaintance and Familiarity he contracted with *Theocritus*, as he did by the princely Regard he met with from *Antigonus*: To him *Theocritus* addresses his sixth *Idyllium*, his Loves
he

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he describes in the Seventh, and from him, he borrows the pious beginning of the Seventeenth.

ABOVE forty Greek Scholiasts have employed their Labours in commenting upon the Works of *Aratus*. *Cicero* raises his Character, by saying that he wrote *Ornatissimos atque optimos Versus*, most polite and most excellent Verses. *Claudius* and *Germanicus Cæsar* did each of them translate his *Phænomena* into *Latin*, as did *Cicero* likewise when he was very young; and besides these, *Festus Avienus* turned this Work into elegant *Latin Verse*. *Ovid* speaking of this Writer, says of him, *Sole & Luna semper Aratus erit*, the Fame of *Aratus* would continue as long as the Sun and Moon endured. He was formerly, says *Vossius*, and is still of very great Authority among Astronomers. We are told by *Macrobius*, that *Virgil* in his *Georgicks* borrowed several Things of this Poet; but *Quintilian* speaks with more Coldness upon his Character. The Verses of *Aratus*, says he, are without Life or Spirit, and have not those Ornaments, nor that poetical Variety which uses to affect the Reader; and yet, he tells us, he was a Person proper enough for the Work he undertook.

ST. *Paul* cites an Expression of this Writer, *Acts xvii. v. 28. We are also his Offspring.*



OPPIAN.



O P P I A N.

THIS *Greek* Poet was a Native of *Anazarba*, a City of *Cilicia*, and was born in the former part of the Reign of the Emperor *Commodus*: He was the Son of *Agésilas*, a Man of some Quality and Distinction in that City; who observing the promising Endowments of his Son, supplied him with all the Advantages of Education, and furnished him with Abilities which render'd him one of the greatest Genius's of the Age in which he lived.

THE Son had an Opportunity of shewing his Gratitude to his Father for the Care and Expence of bringing up; for it happened that *Severus* the *Roman* Emperor, going a Progress into *Cilicia*, took an Opportunity of passing thro' the City *Anazarba*, where *Oppian* was born: He was received with all the Marks of Grandeur and Magnificence that the Place could shew, the Magistrates and Citizens attending upon him in all their Formalities. Upon this Occasion old *Agésilas* avoided to pay his Compliments, and staid at home. This Neglect was resented as the highest Indignity by the Emperor, who immediately banished *Agésilas* into the Island *Malta*, where *Oppian* accompanied him to pay his Duty, and assist him in his Exile.

IN this Retirement, and to pass away some melancholy Hours, he gave himself up to the
Amuse-

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Amusements of Poetry, in which he so well succeeded, that he conceived some Hopes of relieving his Father's Misfortunes, by some luckily Attempt of his Muse; who engaged him in writing a Poem upon Fishing called *Halicutica*, which he dedicated to *Antoninus Caracalla*, the Son of that Emperor.

HE wrote another Poem called *Cynegetica*, or Verses upon Hunting; both these Copies, and perhaps some other Pieces, he carried to *Rome*, and presented them to *Severus* the Emperor: This Prince was so wonderfully pleased with the Present, that he rewarded the Poet with a Piece of Gold for every Verse, (which gave them the Name of *Golden Verses*) and assured him, he would deny him no Favour he could reasonably expect: He instantly thought of requesting his Father's Deliverance, which was granted, and *Agessilaus* returned from Exile, and had the Pleasure of seeing his Son with him at *Anazarba*, who soon left *Rome* to breath his native Air. But the Happiness of his Father's Company did not continue long, for the Son was seized by a Pestilential Disease that then raged at *Anazarba*, which carried him off in the thirtieth Year of his Age. His Funeral Rites were executed with great Magnificence at the Publick Expence: His Citizens erected a Statue in Honour of him, with an Inscription.

Ὀππιανὸς κλέειλλον, &c.

Oppian I was below'd by every Muse,
But now, alas! the cruel Fates refuse
A longer Life; they cut me off yet young,
And end my Life, and so conclude my Song.

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*Could Death have staid her hand till Time had brought
Maturer Judgment, and Perfection wrought,
I should have soar'd with an uncommon Flight
Above the Race of Men, and reach'd a nobler Height.*

HE left behind him the two Poems above-mentioned, and is said to have written a Piece upon the Subject of *Fowling*, which is supposed to lie concealed in some of the Libraries of *Italy*, but is not yet discover'd.

OPPIAN is dry, says *Rapin*, but the Sourness of this Criticism has not hindred very able Judges from raising the Character of this Poet above the common level, and thinking him capable of reaching the loftiest Strains of *Greek* Poetry. *Scaliger* had a particular Esteem for this Writer; *Oppian*, he says, is a most excellent Poet, he is agreeable and easy, and yet sublime, eloquent, and harmonious; so that he has not only surpassed *Gratius* and *Nemesianus*, who have written upon the same Subject, but he seems to have the very Air of *Virgil*, whom he endeavoured particularly to imitate: I always thought, says he, he gave us the true lively Image of that Divine Poet. The learned *Borrichius* observes, that the Style of *Oppian* is copious and beautiful, abounding with excellent Sentences, sometimes a little obscure, but always learned; and that his Prefaces are so very elaborate, and of the *Asiatick* Form, that they may well enough pass for so many Harangues and Panegyricall Orations. The particular Excellency of this Poet lies in his Thoughts and Comparisons, and he overcame a great Difficulty in observing an Uniformity in all Parts, and at the same time preserving the Elegancy of his Style. *Faber* calls him that

VOL. I. H admirable,

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admirable, and never to be enough commend-
ed Poet. *Brown* in his *Vulgar Errors* remarks,
that *Oppian* in his Poems of *Hunting* and *Fish-*
ing, hath but sparingly inserted the vulgar Con-
ceptions upon those Subjects. So that abating
the annual Mutation of Sexes in the *Hiæna*,
the single Sex of the *Rhinoceros*, the Antipathy
between two Drums of a Lamb and a Wolf's
Skin, the Informity of Cubs, the Venation of
Centaurs, the Copulation of the *Muræna* and
Viper, with some few others, he may be read
with great Profit and Delight, being one of the
best *Epick* Poets.

It is supposed, that in his Description of a
well-bred Horse, he has taken several Things
out of the thirty-ninth Chapter of the Book of
Job.



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P L A U T U S.

LATIN Dramatic Poetry was taken from the new Comedy of the Greeks, and is termed *Palliata*, when the Subject is Greek; *Togata*, when Latin; *Matoria*, when the Measures of the Action were turbulent; *Statoria*, when peaceable; *Mixta*, when both. The first Latin Comedian was *Livius Andronicus*, who, as *Eusebius* informs us, was Servant to *Livius Salinator*, whose Children he taught, and had his Freedom given him by his Master for his Ingenuity. He was a Greek by Birth, and translating some of the Greek Comedies, he introduced them upon the Roman Stage. *Livius's* first Play was acted in the Year of Rome five hundred and fourteen, in the first Year of the hundred and thirty fifth Olympiad. *Nævius* brought one of his Plays upon the Stage about five Years after, and about six Years after that *Plautus* was born; and if we suppose him of the Age of twenty two when he wrote his first Play, it will fall in with the Year of Rome five hundred and fifty, for it is likely he began very young, the needy Circumstances he lay under being a Spur to his Wit and Industry.

MARCUS ACCIUS PLAUTUS was born at *Sarsina*, a small Town in *Umbria*, a Province of *Italy*, now called *Emilia*. He was named *Plautus*, as *Pestus* informs us, from his Elat Feet. His Parentage was mean, and it is said, he was the

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Son of a Slave. He appeared early upon the *Roman Stage* as an Actor, and ruined himself, as some say, by the extravagant Expence he laid out upon his Player's Dress. At the same time he was a Writer of Comedies, and flourished when *Cato the Censor* was distinguish'd at *Rome* for his Eloquence. His Plays were so well received by the *Romans*, that the Poet having been handsomely paid for them, (as *Varro* says) thought of doubling his Stock by Trading, in which he was so unfortunate, that he lost all he had got by the Muses, and for his Subsistence, was reduced, in the time of a general Famine, to serve a Baker and grind at the Mill. How long he continued in this Distress, is no where said; but *Varro* adds, that the Poet's Wit was his best Support, and that he composed three Plays during this daily Drudgery, the Profits of which one would think might be enough to extricate him from this hard Service.

WE learn from *Agellius*, that a hundred and thirty Comedies went under his Name; but the most learned *Ælius Stilo* was of Opinion, that he was the Author of no more than twenty-five; *Varro* of twenty-one. The *Grammarians* have determined twenty to be Genuine, what we now have, but they are not all entire. None of them were composed at the Mill, but before he was reduced. The occasion of this Difference in the Number of his Plays, is thought to proceed from the mixing the Works of other comical Poets with those of this Author, and particularly the Comedies of one *Plautius*, whose Name being so very like that of *Plautus*, might very well be the Cause of such a Mistake.

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WE know nothing more of the Life of *Plautus*; when he died is likewise uncertain. *Agellius* has recorded an Epitaph which the Poet made of himself: The Lines are exceeding vain, if they are genuine;

*Post quam est Mortem aptus Plautus, Comœdia luget,
Scerta est deserta; hinc risus, ludusque jocisque
Et Numeri innumeri simul Omnes collachrymarunt.*

Wit, Laughter, Jest, and all the Train that use
To adorn the Scene, and grace the comic Muse,
Forsook the Stage at *Plautus*' Death to mourn,
And Harmony undone sat mourning o'er his Urn.

COMEDY, which made but a very indifferent Figure under *Andronicus* and *Nævius*, began in the Writings of *Plautus* to receive those Ornaments of Language and Art, which were altogether essential to Dramatic Poetry. Among the Comical Poets, says *Lipsius*, *Plautus* must be allowed the Preference; for in him we not only meet with a Purity of Style, and excellent Language, but he also affords us a great deal of Wit, Raillery, and pretty Conceits, besides that *Attic* Elegancy, which one may look for long enough in the rest of the *Roman* Authors, but never find. The Propriety of his Expression is made the Standard of the purest *Latin*. If the Muses were to speak *Latin*, says *Varron*, they would certainly use his very Style: He is called the *Tenth Muse*, the exact Rule of the *Roman* Language, and the Father of true Elocution. Never, says *Crucius* in the third Book of his Epistles, was any thing more pure, more elegant, and better skilled in the *Latin* Tongue than

than *Plautus*, all the Flower and Elegancy of the *Roman* Language being comprehended in him: He must be a Man of Parts, who has a true Taste of the Excellencies of this Writer; but you must take care when you read *Plautus*, or *Terence*, of proposing to yourself to follow them in every thing, for they sometimes make use of old obsolete Words, which if you carry but one foot from the Theatre, they will not keep, but immediately stink.

It is the general Character of this comic Writer, that he was ingenious in his Designs, happy in his Imaginations, fruitful in his Invention, but his Raillery is flat; his Wit, which makes the Vulgar laugh, makes the better sort of his Audience to pity him: He certainly says the best things in the World, and very often says the most wretched; this a Man is subject to, when he endeavours to be too witty; he will make Laughter by extravagant Expressions and Hyperboles, when he cannot succeed to make it by things. He is not altogether so regular in the Contrivance of his Pieces, nor in the Distribution of the Acts, but he is more simple in his Subjects: For the Fables of *Terence* are ordinarily compounded, as is seen in the *Andria*, which contains two Loves. This is what was objected to *Terence*, that he made one *Latin* Comedy of two *Greek*, the more to animate his Theatre. But then the Plots are more naturally unravelled than those of *Plautus*, as those of *Plautus* are more natural than those of *Aristophanes*.

THERE are many insipid Jest's have escaped this Writer, for which *Horace* condemns him,

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and ridicules the Folly of those who admired him.

IT is certain, that his Raillery is flat, he is often cold and languid, sometimes obscene and ridiculous; but it must be allowed that his Design was to please his Audience in general; whereas *Terence* desired to recommend himself to the Approbation of the Few of Wit and true Taste. *Plautus* ventured at any thing, says *Scaliger*, if he could but move and affect his Auditory, either by making them laugh, or by introducing some new Thing, or coining some new Word. He wrote for Bread, and regarded his present Interest more than his future Fame.

YET *Horace* allows him to be a lively and entertaining Writer, and hastning with his Characters to the winding up of the Play.

Plautus ad Exemplar Siculi proferare Epicharmi.
Ep. 1. l. 2.

THIS *Epicharmus* was a Scholar of *Pythagoras*, and flourished in *Sicily* in the time of *Servius Tullus*. *Plato* is said to have made great Improvements by reading his Comedies. This Poet was banished by *Hiero* King of *Sicily* for having spoken too freely of the Queen his Wife.

IF we consider the Fables and Characters of the two *Roman* Comedians, *Plautus* and *Terence*, it will appear *Plautus* exceeds *Terence*, in the Variety of his Characters and Vivacity of Action. *Plautus* is vehement and fierce, *Terence* sedate and cool. *Terence* does not let his Dramas rise to the Loftiness of Tragedy, nor sink into low Ridicule; *Plautus* is often scurrilous in his Jest, and unequal in his Style. *Vossius* observes, *Plautus* always seems to be new,

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and unlike himself, as well in the Matter as Diction; but *Terence's* Fables are similar, and his Diction, when he treats upon the same Subject, little varied. The reason why *Terence* did not affect that kind of Wit *Plautus* abounds with, was because he made it his aim to please the Nobility of *Rome*, and not the Populace. *Plautus* had a different View; for, says *Scaliger*, the Populace flowed together, not to learn a Purity of Language, but to relax their Minds with Laughter and Jest, and this is the reason *Terence's* fine Language was postponed to the facetious Wit of many other Comedians. *Terence*, says *Scaliger*, is more languid than *Plautus*, and the reason, says he, why we prefer him to *Plautus*, is because the Moderns only make it their Aim to express themselves well. The Style of *Plautus* was more rich and glaring, of *Terence* more close and even. *Plautus* had the most dazzling Outside, and the most lively Colours, but *Terence* drew the finest Figures and Postures, and had the best Design. The former would usually put his Spectators into a loud Laughter, but the latter steal them into a sweet Smile, that should continue from the beginning to the end of the Representation. Their Plots are both artful, but *Terence's* is more apt to languish, whilst *Plautus's* Spirit maintains the Action with vigor. *Plautus* appears the better Comedian of the two, as *Terence* the finer Poet. The former has more compass and variety, the latter more Regularity and Truth in his Characters. *Plautus* shone most upon the Stage, *Terence* pleases best in the Closet. Men of a refined Taste would prefer *Terence*, *Plautus* diverted both *Patrician* and *Plebeian*.

T E R E N C E.

T E R E N C E.

PUBLIUS TERENTIUS was an *African*, born at *Carthage*, as it is supposed in the Year of *Rome* five hundred fifty nine, seven Years after the second *Punic War*; he was a Captive perhaps taken in the Wars the *Carthaginians* continually had with the *Numidians*, and sold when very young to *Terentius Lucanus*, a *Roman Senator*. It is impossible to give any Account of his Family, his Parentage it is likely was mean; but his Master, in whose Hands he fell, made amends for the Loss of his Relations and Friends, and perceiving an excellent Disposition in his young Slave, and a promising and obliging Carriage, he did not only give him the Advantage of a most tender and genteel Education, but his Freedom too; and what is more, when he was very young, a Favour not very usual in those Days. As for his Person he was of a middle Stature, very slender, and somewhat of a tawny Complexion. We know nothing of his *African Name*, that of *Terentius* he took from *Terentius Lucanus*, the *Roman Senator*.

UNDER these Encouragements he applied himself closely to Learning, and his Observations and Studies of Men and Manners seem'd to be his chief Employment. His exact Remarks upon Men's natural Dispositions, and his Genius led him wholly to Dramatick Poetry, particu-

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larly Comedy, wherein all the Humours and Passions of Men are so nicely observ'd and express'd, that we can no where find a truer and more lively Representation of Human Nature. His comely Personage, and his extraordinary Merit, brought him into great Esteem, not only with the People in general, likewise with the greatest Genius in *Rome*; but he was more especially beloved and cherish'd by the famous *Scipio Africanus* and *Laelius*. With these two inseparable Friends and Companions, he had gain'd more than ordinary Familiarity, passing away many a fair Hour in Pleasures and Delights, at their Country House at Mount *Alba*. *Furius* was another of *Terence's* Patrons, but his Character is less known, though he is mention'd by his Enemies, as one of the greatest Men in *Rome*. Those who envied the Reputation of this Comic Writer, industriously gave out that his Plays were compos'd by these Noblemen, in order to lessen his growing Credit.

He made himself Master of the *Greek* Tongue, from which he borrowed much of his Plays, of which we have six remaining: When he had finished his first Play, and brought it to the *Ediles*, they would needs have him read it before *Cæcilius*, who was an excellent Judge, and the most celebrated Comic Poet of the Age. *Cæcilius* was then at Supper: *Terence's* Habit, it seems, was none of the best at that time, therefore he was seated in an ordinary By-place, and there order'd to begin; but a few of his fine Verses so well made amends for the Meanness of his Dress, that he was immediately order'd to sit down, and take part of what he found at the Table, being placed next to *Cæcilius* himself.

self. After Supper he read over the rest of his Play, to *Cæcilius's* wonderful Delight: The Name of it we find not, it could not be the *Andrian*, for that was made two Years after *Cæcilius* was dead. This great Judge of Comedy was originally a Slave, and called *Statius*, but with his Freedom obtained the Surname of *Cæcilius*, and became a famous Comic Writer. He is thought to have been an *Insubrian Gaul* by Birth, and a Native of *Milan*. He was an intimate Friend of *Ennius*; *Cicero* does not approve the Harshness of his Style; *Horace* gives him the Preference for the Gravity of his Characters:

Vincere Cæcilius Gravitate, Terentius Arte.

AND *Paterculus*, a most exact Judge of Politeness and Delicacy, places him among the best Comic Writers of *Rome*. *Dulcesque Latini-Leporis Facetiæ per Cæcilium, Terentiumque et Afranium sub pari ætate nituerunt.*

IN the twenty eighth Year of his Age he wrote his *Andrian*, the first Comedy that we know of, which he took a great Part of from *Menander the Greek Poet*. The Year following he composed his *Hecyra*, or *Mother-in-Law*, which he took chiefly from *Apollodorus the Greek Poet*. This Play was the first time unsuccessful, and is the only one whose Plot is perfectly single. Two Years after he made his *Heautontimorumenos*, or *Self-Tormentor*, which he borrowed mostly from *Menander*: Two Years after that his *Phormio* taken chiefly from *Apollodorus's Epidicæcomenés*. The same Year he wrote his *Eunuch*, of which he borrowed a great Part of *Menander*. This may be reckoned his best, however it came off with far greatest Applause. The

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Year following, in the thirty fourth Year of his Age, he wrote his last Comedy called *Adelphi* or the *Brothers*, and that too mostly taken from *Menander*; which *Varro*, as to the beginning of it, prefers to the beginning of *Menander* himself. It is supposed that *Caius Sulpitius Apollinaris*, a learned Grammarian, and a Native of *Carthage*, was the Author of the Verses prefixed to *Terence's* Comedies.

MENANDER, to whom *Terence* was so much obliged, was a Comic Poet of *Athens*, born in the hundred and ninth Olympiad. He is said to have written a hundred and eight Comedies, which are all lost except some Citations from ancient Authors. If a true Judgment can be formed from the Fragments that remain of him, one may say that he drew very pleasant Images of the Civil Life: His Style is pure, neat, shining, and natural, he persuades like an Orator, and instructs like a Philosopher; he makes Men speak according to their Character: *Plutarch* in the Comparison he has made between this Writer and *Aristophanes*, says, that the Muse of *Aristophanes* is like an Impudent, and that of *Menander* resembles a virtuous Woman.

THE Comedies of *Terence* were in great Reputation among the *Romans*, and generally succeeded very well, though *Plautus* had sometimes better Luck upon the Stage; but never a one of his took like the *Eunuch*, for which he received eight thousand Sesterces, a Reward (though not exceeding sixty Pounds of our Money) greater in those days than ever Poet had. Besides, it was acted twice in one day; the more strange, because Plays then were never made but to be acted two or three times in all. All six were almost

almost equally esteemed by his Countrymen, and most of them had their peculiar Beauties. 'Tis observ'd, that the *Andrian* and the *Brothers* excel in their Characters and Manners; the *Eunuch* and the *Phormio* in the Vigor and Liveliness of their Intrigues; and the *Self-Tormentor* and *Mother-in-Law*, in their Thought, Passions and Purity of Style.

UPON the account of his intimate Acquaintance with *Scipio* and *Lælius*, it was and still is generally believed, that they had a great, if not a principal Share in the making of his Plays; and this Conjecture is grounded not only upon the extraordinary Familiarity between them, but also the Accuracy, Propriety, Purity, and Politeness of the Style, which do indeed seem to exceed the Abilities of a poor *African*. But these are meer Conjectures, intermixed with a Spice of Malice, tho' indeed redounding much to his Honour, as he himself intimates in his Prologue to the *Brothers*. The extraordinary Familiarity between them was probably caused by his eminent Deserts: The Accuracy and Politeness of his Style proceeded perhaps from his Labour and Studies, as the Purity and Politeness of it might be the Effect of his *Roman Education*, and his keeping the best Company; and if he defended himself but slightly when he was accused, that may be imputed to his great Complaisance to those noble Persons.

BUT notwithstanding these plausible Reasons, to vindicate *Terence* from the Charge of being assisted in his Writings, *Suetonius* relates a Story that gives some foundation for the Report, especially with regard to *Lælius*: He says, that upon the first of *March*, which was the Feast of
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the *Roman Ladies*, *Laelius* being desired by his Wife, to sup a little sooner than ordinary, he prayed her not to disturb him; and that coming very late to Supper that Night, he said he had never composed any thing with more Pleasure and Success, and being asked by the Company, what it was, he repeated some Verses out of the third Scene of the fourth Act of the *Self-Tormentor*; which Commentators agree, are extremely fine. This Report did not lessen after his Death, for *Valgius* a Poet, Cotemporary with *Horace*, says as much in positive Terms. Those Noblemen perhaps might divert themselves in composing sometimes a Scene or two for a Poet they conversed so familiarly with, and so highly respected, tho' I am apt to suppose that the chief Assistance he receiv'd, was in the part of his Characters, and while the Comedian took care to preserve them in the Humour and Manners he had given them, his ingenious Friends might help him, in giving them the true Turn of Gentlemen.

TERENCE, to perfect himself in the Manners and Customs of the *Grecians*, left *Rome* to go for that Country and died, soon after his Departure in the thirty fifth Year of his Age. Some say, he went thither to collect some of *Menander's* Plays, and died in his Return with above a hundred of them translated, which perished by Shipwreck, and he pined himself to death for the Loss. Others, that he died at *Stymphalus*, a Village in *Arcadia*, whither he had put back from Sea. It's said, that he died very poor, and left only one Daughter behind him, who after his Decease was married to a *Roman Knight*. *Terence* left her a House, and a Garden of six Acres,

Aeres, which was situated under the *Appian* Way, nigh that Place called *Villa Martis*.

THE Character of this Comic Writer is inexhaustible, his particular Excellencies are without number; so that we must be satisfied with a general Account of his Perfections. He was certainly the most exact, the most elaborate, and the most natural of all the Dramatic Poets. The Pleasantness, says *Heinsius*, the Elegancy, the Judgment and Beauty which is to be found in this Author, is admirable, and hardly to be expressed. There is no Writer, says *Erasmus*, from whom we can better learn the pure *Roman* Style. *Scaliger*, when he was an old Man, after he had run through almost all the Arts and Sciences, was so great an Admirer of *Terence*, that he seldom had him out of his hand. His Style is so neat and pure, his Characters so true and perfect, his Plots so regular and probable, and almost every thing so absolutely just and agreeable, that he may well seem to merit that Praise which several have given him, that he was the most correct Author in the World.

His great Art in the Economy and Constitution of his Fables, makes him infinitely preferable to *Plautus*, and his Ethical Characters are a Standard of Imitation to all Ages. See, says *Boileau*, in his Art of Poetry, with what an Air, the Father in *Terence* comes to rave at the Imprudence of his amorous Son, and with what an Air the Lover hears the Lessons, and then runs to his Mistress to forget them all. Is not this, says he, a true Image of a Lover, a Son, and a real Father? *Varro* gives him preference in this respect to all other Poets, and *Donatus* observes this of the Temperature of his Plays, particularly in the last Scene
of

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of the *Phormio*, that this pleasant Poet smoothes the Gravity of his serious Subjects with Comic Mirth. *Quintilian*, who thought the *Roman Comedy* defective, allowed *Terence* to be the most elegant of all the Comedians; and observes, that if his Comedies had been confined to *Trime-tre-Iambic*, they would have been more beautiful: But *Dr. Hare* is of opinion, that the Poet's Design in the Variety of his Measures, was to gratify and relieve the Spectators by an agreeable Variety, and that the *Latins* imitated the *Greeks*, who followed Nature in this grateful Vicissitude. In short, his Faults are so few and inconsiderable, that *Scaliger* said, there were not three to be found throughout the six Plays. He seems to want nothing to make him absolutely complete, but only that *Attic Urbanity*, that *Vis Comica*, that *Cæsar* wishes he had, and which *Plautus* was Master of, in so high a degree.

*Tu quoque, tu in summis, O dimidiate Menander,
Poneris, & merito, puri sermonis amator,
Lenibus atque utinam scriptis adjuncta foret Vis
Comica, ut æquato virtus polleret honore
Cum Græcis, neque in hac despectus parte jaceres,
Unum hoc maceror, & doleo tibi deesse Terenti.*

*Thou Half Menander, thou art justly plac'd
Among the Poets of the chiefest Name;
Thy Language is correct, but I could wish
The Sweetness of thy Style had Comic Force
Joined with it; then equal with the Greeks
Had been thy Spirit; and thou hadst gain'd Ap-
plause;
Here, Terence, lies thy Want; I'm sorry for it.*

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BUT, says *Rapin*, tho' *Cæsar* calls *Terence* a diminutive *Menander*, because he only had the Sweetness and the Smoothness, but had not the Force and Vigor, yet he has writ in a manner so natural, and so judicious, that of a Copy as he was, he is become an Original, for never Man had so clear an Insight into Human Nature.

THE Style of *Terence* has been admired by the best Judges in all Ages, and truly it deserves it, for certainly never any one was more clear, and more accurate in his Expressions than he; his Words are generally nicely chosen, extremely proper and significant, and many of them carry so much Life and Force, that they can hardly be expressed in any other Language without great Disadvantage to the Original. His Narrations are short and clear, his Turns are soft and delicate; and for the Purity of his Language in general, we find it very much commended, even by *Tully* himself; and one of the Moderns is not at all out of the way, when he tells us, that the *Latin* Tongue will never be lost, as long as *Terence* can be read.

BUT his Style, tho' so very extraordinary, in a great measure may be learnt by Industry, long Custom and continual Usage, and has been imitated to a high degree by several; and indeed, this was but as rich Attire and outward Ornaments, to set off a more beautiful Body. But in his Characters and Manners it is that he triumphs without a Rival, and not only Dramatick, but all other Poets, must yield to him in that Point: for these are drawn exactly to the Life, perfectly just, truly proportionable, and fully kept up to the last. The more a Man looks into them, the more he must admire them.

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He will find there not only such Beauty in his Images, but also such excellent Precepts of Morality, such solid Sense in each Line, such Depths of Reasoning in each Period, and such close Arguing betwixt each Party, that he must needs perceive him to be a Person of the most exact Sense, and the strongest Judgment. He had a peculiar Happiness at pleasing and amusing his Audience, always keeping them in a most even, pleasant, smiling Temper; and this is the most distinguishing Part of his Character from other Writers.

HE well understood the Rules of the Stage, or rather those of Nature, was perfectly regular, wonderful exact and careful in ordering each *Protasis* or Entrance, *Epitasis* or Working up, *Catastasis* or Height, and *Catastrophe* or Unravelling the Plot; which last he was famous for, making it spring necessarily from the Incidents, and neatly and dextrously untying the Knot, whilst others would either tear or cut it in pieces.

THE Nature of his Plots was for the most part grave and solid, they were all double except the *Hecyra*, or *Mother-in-law*; yet so contrived, that one was always an Underplot to the other, so that he still kept perfectly to the first great Rule of the Stage, the Unity of Action. As for the second great Rule, the Unity of Time, (that is, the whole Action to be performed in one Day) he was as exact in that as possible; for the longest Action of any of his Plays, reaches not above eleven Hours. He was no less careful in the third Rule, the Unity of Place; for he never shifts his Scene in any one of his Plays, but keeps constantly to the same Place,

Place, from the beginning to the end. Then for the Continuance in the Action, he never fails in any one Particular, but every Instrument is perpetually at work, in carrying on their several Designs, and in them the Design of the Whole, so that the Stage never grows cold till all is finish'd. His Plots are so clear and natural, that they might very well go for a Representation of a Thing that had really happened, and not for the meer Invention of the Poet.

THE Censure of *St. Evremont* upon the Writings of *Terence*, is of no great Authority. This Comic Writer, he says, is generally allowed to be the best of all the ancient Authors, in hitting the Humours and Tempers of Men; but there is this Objection to him, That he has not Extent enough, and his whole Talent goes no further, than to give a true and natural Representation of a Servant, an old Man, a covetous Father, a debauched Son, or a Slave: This is the utmost of what *Terence* can do. You are not to expect from him any thing of Gallantry or Passion, or of the Thoughts or Discourse of a Gentleman.





LUCRETIVS.

IT is agreed on all hands, even by his own Testimony, that *Titus Lucretius Carus* was a Roman, and born at Rome. His very Name directs us to the noble and ancient Family of the *Lucretii*, which being divided into many Branches, comprehended under it, the *Tricipitini*, the *Cinnæ*, the *Vespillones*, the *Triones*, the *Ofellæ*, and the *Galli*, and gave to Rome many Consuls, Tribunes, and Prætors, who were the great Supports and Ornaments of the Commonwealth.

His Name was *Titus Lucretius Carus*, and no other; for what *Lambinus* pretends, that he might have been called either *T. Lucretius Vespillo Carus*, or *T. Lucretius Ofella Carus*, is mere Conjecture, and grounded upon no Authority. *Carus* was a Roman-Surname, of which *Ovid* and many others make mention, but we no where find how it came to be given to *Lucretius*. It is not improbable it was conferred upon him, either on account of his excellent and sprightly Wit, his Affability and Sweetness of Temper and Manners, or for some other the like endearing Qualities, that render'd him agreeable to those, with whom he conversed. It is uncertain, from which of the *Lucretian* Branches this Poet claims his Descent; there being nothing any where of his

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his Parentage recorded. There lived indeed in those Days, one *Quintus Lucretius*, but whether he was Brother of our Poet *Lucretius*, or in what degree of Relation they were to one another, cannot be discover'd.

THE time of his Birth is almost as doubtful, some placing it in one Year, some in another; the most received Opinion is, that he was born twelve Years after *Cicero*, about the second Year of the hundred and seventy first Olympiad, in the Consulship of *Lucius Licinius Crassus*, and *Quintus Mutius Scævola*, about the six hundred and fifty eighth Year of *Rome*.

ABOUT this time, the *Romans* began to apply themselves to the Study of Philosophy. Supposing therefore *Lucretius* to be nobly descended, and a Youth of a sprightly and forward Genius, it is an easy Inference that he received a suitable Education; and by his Parents or other Relations was sent to study at *Athens*, where at that time the *Epicurean* Philosophy was in great Reputation. This is the more probable to be true, because it was then the Custom of the *Romans* to send their Youths thither to be instructed in the Learning of the *Greeks*. Thus some Years after *Virgil* studied there, as we learn from himself, when writing to *Messala*, he says,

Et si me Vario, &c.

And the learned *Propertius* desired earnestly

Illic vel studiis, &c.

By *Plato's* Studies to correct his Mind,
And in thy Gardens, *Epicurus*, find
Improvement.

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HE studied under *Zeno*, who had the direction of the Gardens at that time, and was the Honour of the *Epicurean* Sect. *Phædrus* was another of his Masters, whom *Cicero* mentions as a Person of the greatest Humanity. These were the Preceptors of *Lucretius*, as they were likewise of *Pomponius Atticus*, *Memmius*, *Cassius*, and many others, who in that Age render'd themselves very illustrious in the Republick of *Rome*. How he spent his Time at *Athens*, how studiously he improved it, let his Poem be witness. That he fitted himself for the best Company, is evident by what *Cornelius Nepos* tells us, of the great Intimacy between him; *Pomponius Atticus*, and *Memmius*; and no doubt but he was intimate likewise with *Tully*, and his Brother, who make such honourable mention of him.

THE Accounts that remain of this Poet, stop short here, and no more is to be found concerning him, till we come to his Death; yet it is difficult to find in what manner he died, nor is it much easier to determine in what Year of his Life his Death happened. Some make him die on the very day *Virgil* was born, when *Pompey* the Great was the third time Consul, and *Cæcilius Metellus Pius* was his Colleague, in the Year of the City seven hundred and one, at which time there were great Commotions in the Republick: for *Clodius* was then killed by *Milo*; *Memmius* and many others being convicted of Bribery, were banished from *Rome* into *Greece*; and *Cæsar*, who was then forty four Years of Age, was laying waste the Provinces of *Gaul*. If this imaginary Circumstance were true, it would be apt to make a *Pythagorean* believe, that the Soul of

Lucretius

Lucretius transmigrated into *Virgil's* Body. And thus far it is true, that *Lucretius's* Diction is so pure and elegant, and his Versification, where the Subject gives him the least Scope, so noble and sounding, and his Sentiments so truly Poetical, that Poetry must needs have declined among the *Romans*, had any but *Virgil* succeeded him. But that Particular of the Death of this Poet is no more than an ingenious Fiction, founded upon this, that *Virgil* assumed the *Toga Virilis* upon the same day that *Lucretius* died.

THE Chronicle of *Eusebius* observes, that he died by his own Hands in the forty fourth Year of his Age, being made distracted by a Philtre, which either his Mistress or his Wife *Lucilia*, (for so some call her, tho' without Authority) in a Fit of Jealousy had given him, not with a design to deprive him of his Senses, or to take away his Life, but only to increase the Passion of his Love. *Donatus*, or whoever was the Author of the Life of *Virgil* that goes under his Name, writes that he died three Years before; when *Pompey* the Great, and *M. Licinius Crassus* were both of them the second time Consuls. Others, who allow that having lost his Senses, he laid violent hands on his own Life, yet place his Death in the twenty sixth Year of his Age, and believe that his Madness proceeded from the Cares and Melancholy that oppressed him, on account of the Banishment of his beloved *Memmius*; to which others again add likewise another Cause, the fatal Calamities under which his Country then laboured. And indeed it is certain, that a few Years before his Death, *Lucretius* was an Eye-witness of the wild Administration

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nistration of Affairs in the days of *Clodius* and *Catiline*, who gave such a Blow to the Republic of *Rome*, as not long after occasioned its total Subversion. Of these Commotions, he himself complains in the beginning of his first Book, where addressing himself to *Venus*, he implores her to intercede with the God of War, to restore Peace and Quiet to his native Country.

Hunc tu Diva, &c. lib. i.

*Peace is thy Gift alone ; for furious Mars
The only Governor and God of Wars,
When tir'd with Heat and Toil does oft resort
To taste the Pleasures of the Paphian Court,
Where on thy Bosom he supinely lies,
And greedily drinks Love at both his Eyes,
Till quite o'ercome, snatching an eager Kiss,
He hastily goes on to greater Bliss:
Then midst his strict Embraces, clasp thy Arms
About his Neck, and call forth all thy Charms,
Careless with all thy subtle Arts, become
A Flatterer, and beg a Peace for Rome.*

THERE are yet some other Accounts given of the Time and Manner of his Death, but since in so great a Variety of Opinions we can fix on no Certainty, nor determine which of them is true, it would be loss of Time, to dwell any longer upon them.

THE only Remains, this great Genius has left us, are his six Books *Of the Nature of Things*, which contain an exact System of the *Epicurean* Philosophy; they were read and admired by the Ancients, and if *Ovid* could preface,

Carmina

*Carmina sublimis tunc sunt peritura Lucreti,
Exitio terras cum dabit una Dies.*

*Sublime Lucretius wrote with so much Fire,
That his bright Work shall with the World expire.*

THE Learned are in some doubt concerning the number of Books written by *Lucretius*, and some believe that he writ more than six; but this must be a Mistake, for in these six is contained the whole Doctrine, and all the Philosophy of *Epicurus*, as far as relates to the Explication of Nature, or natural Causes and Effects, and there is nothing left to be said farther upon that Subject. Add to this the manifest and pertinent Connexion of one Book to another, the judicious Method he has observed, in handling the several Subjects of which he treats, and his Artfulness in the Disposition of them: They seem naturally to follow one another. In the first Book he treats of the Principles of Things, in the last of Meteors and of the Heavens: Has not this Method been constantly practised by all, who have treated of the Knowledge of Nature? Even *Epicurus* himself observed the very same Disposition; as appears by the few surviving Remains of that Philosopher, his three Epistles to *Herodotus*, *Menæceus*, and *Pythocles*.

BUT as the Work of this Poet contained no more than six Books, so there is reason to believe that some of his Verses are perhaps wanting; for, as with almost all the ancient Authors so more especially with this Writer, some have assumed to themselves too great a Liberty, and alter'd, added, or taken away many things. *Servius* cites this Fragment from *Lucretius*:

— *Superi spoliatus luminis Aër,*

Which perhaps may have been his, tho' it be no where found in any of his Books, nor can it easily be discover'd where it has been left out. *Eusebius* informs us, that this Poem was corrected by *Cicero*, after the Death of the Author; *Father Briet* seems to believe it, since he uses these Words, — *In suis Versibus, duris quidem, sed valide Latinis, & Tullii limâ dignissimis.* His Verses are difficult indeed, but his *Latin* is pure, and worthy the Revival of *Cicero*. Some think he only meant that *Lucretius's* Poem had need of *Cicero's* File, but others believe he intended that they do honour to *Cicero*, by whom they were corrected, or that it plainly appears, they received the finishing Stroke from that great Man. *Lambinus* contradicts this, but the Arguments he brings against the Assertion of *Eusebius* are but weak and of little Validity.

LUCRETIVUS inscrib'd his Poem to his intimate Friend *Memmius*, a Person of extraordinary Merit, whom he celebrates with great Honour in many places of it. This *Memmius* was descended from one of the most ancient Families in *Rome*, being one of those that *Virgil* has immortalized in his *Æneid*, deriving them from *Mnestheus* one of the principal *Trojans* that accompanied *Æneas* into *Italy*:

— *Mox Italus Mnestheus genus a quo nomine Memm;*

HE had been *Prætor* of *Bithynia*, and upon his return was accused of nine Misdemeanours by *Cæsar* to the People, but acquitted, and afterwards grew very intimate with him. He was also *Tribune* of the People, when among others he accused

Rabirius,

Rabirius, in whose Defence *Cicero* made the Oration we have under that Name. *Cicero* gives him the Character of a great Scholar, but most skilful in the *Greek* Learning, an ingenious and good Orator, and Master of a polite easy Style; he was accused of Corruption and Bribery in canvassing for the Consulship, and condemn'd to Banishment. *Cicero* in one of his Epistles to *Sulpitius* tells us, he was innocent, and had retired after his Exile to *Athens*, from thence to *Mitylene*, and at last settled at *Patras*, where he died soon after.

IT is wonderful that this admirable Poem of *Lucretius* should be composed in the Time of his Distraction: His six Books of his *Epicurean* Philosophy, says *Eusebius*, were written in his lucid Intervals, when the Strength of Nature had thrown off all the disturbing Particles, and his Mind, as it is observed of Madmen, was sprightly and vigorous. Then in a poetical Rapture he could fly with his *Epicurus* beyond the flaming Limits of this World, frame and dissolve Seas and Heavens in an Instant, and by some unusual Sallies, be the strongest Argument of his own Opinion; for it seems impossible that some things which he delivers should proceed from Reason and Judgment, or from any other Cause but Chance and unthinking Fortune.

THE Character of this Poem is surprisingly raised by the best Judges of the Art. *Lucretius*, says *Agellius*, excelled in Wit and Eloquence; there is not, says *Scaliger*, a better Author in the *Latin* Tongue, *Virgil* copied many things from him. Never any Man, says *Scioppius*, spoke *Latin* to a greater Perfection, neither *Tully* nor *Cæsar* wrote a purer Style. There appears, says

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Bayle, so much Eloquence in the Verse of *Lucretius*, that had he lived in the Time of *Augustus*, he might very well have disputed the Point with *Virgil*; but thirty or forty Years make a mighty Difference between two Authors. *Evelyn*, in his Translation of the first Book of *Lucretius*, observes, that in this Work Nature herself sits triumphant, wanting none of her just Equipage and Attendance, whilst our *Carus* hath erected this everlasting Arch to her Memory, so full of Ornament and exquisite Workmanship, as nothing of this kind has either approach'd or exceeded it. Where the Matter he takes in hand is capable of Form and Lustre, he makes it even to outshine the Sun it self in Splendour; and as he spares no Cost to deck and set it forth, so never had a Man a more rich and luxuriant Fancy, more keen and sagacious Instruments to square the most stubborn and rude Materials into that spiring Softness you will every where find them disposed in this his stupendous and well-built Theatre of Nature.

THERE are two or three Writers who with great Judgment enter more particularly into the Character and Excellencies of this Poem; *Quintilian*, says *Crinitus*, is of opinion that *Lucretius* excels in Elegance of Style, but he is difficult and obscure. This was occasioned not only by the Subject it self, but by reason of the Poorness of the Tongue, and the Newness of the Doctrine he taught, as he testifies himself: He writ six Books of the Nature of Things, in which he has followed the Doctrine of *Epicurus*, and the Example of the Poet *Empedocles*, whose Wit and Poetry he praises with Admiration. It ought

ought not to be wonder'd at, that some of his Verses seem rough and almost like Prose. This was peculiar to the Age in which he writ, as *Furius Albinus* fully witnesseth in *Macrobius*, whose Words are as follows. No Man ought to have the worse Esteem for the ancient Poets upon this account, because their Verses seem to be scabrous, for that Style was then in greatest Vogue; and the following Age had much ado to bring themselves to relish this smoother Diction. Therefore even in the Days of the Emperors, the *Vespasians*, there were not wanting some who chose to read *Lucretius* rather than *Virgil*, and *Lucilius* rather than *Horace*.

LAMBINUS, in his Preface to *Charles IX*, the most Christian King, applauds *Lucretius* as the most polite, most ancient, and most elegant of all the *Latin Writers*, from whom *Virgil* and *Horace* have in many Places borrowed, not half but whole Verses. He, when he disputes of the indivisible Corpuscles, or first Principles of Things, of their Motion and of their various Figuration; of the Void; of the Images, or tenuous Membranes that fly off from the Surface of all Bodies; of the Nature of the Mind and Soul; of the rising and setting of the Planets; of the Eclipse of the Sun and Moon; of the Nature of Lightning; of the Rainbow; of the Causes of Diseases, and many other things, is learned, witty, judicious and elegant. In the Introductions to his Books, in his Comparisons, in his Examples, in his Disputations against the Fear of Death, concerning the Inconveniences and Harms of Love, of Sleep and of Dreams, he is copious, discreet, eloquent, knowing and sublime. We not only read *Homer*,
I 3 but

but even get him by Heart, because under the Veils of Fables, partly obscene, and partly absurd, he is deem'd to have included the Knowledge of all natural and human Things. Shall we not then hear *Lucretius*, who without the Disguise of Fables, and such Trifles, not truly indeed, nor piously, but plainly and openly, and as an *Epicurean*, ingeniously, wittily, and learnedly, and in the most correct and purest of Styles, disputes of the Principles and Causes of Things, of the Universe, of the Parts of the World, of a happy Life, and of things Celestial and Terrestrial. And tho' in many Places he dissents from *Plato*, though he advances many Assertions that are repugnant to our Religion, we ought not therefore to despise and set at nought those Opinions of his, in which not only the ancient Philosophers, but we who profess Christianity agree with him. How admirably does he dispute of the restraining of Pleasures, of the bridling the Passions, and of the attaining Tranquillity of Mind! How wittily does he rebuke and confute those, who affirm that nothing can be perceived, nor nothing known; and who say that the Senses are fallacious! How beautiful are his Descriptions! How graceful, as the *Greeks* call them, his *Episodes*! How fine are his Disputations of Colours, of Mirrours, of the Loadstone, and of the *Averni*? How serious and awful are his Exhortations to live continently, justly, temperately, and innocently! What shall we say of his Diction, than which nothing can be said or imagin'd to be more correct, more clear or more elegant?

BUT the strongest Advocate in Defence of this Poem of *Lucretius*, is *Gifanius*, who has drawn up his Life with exquisite Skill, and represents his Excellencies in the best Light. The Subject of this Poem, says he, had many Ages before been treated by *Empedocles*, whom *Lucretius* held in great Veneration, as appears by the following Elogy, which he gives him in his first Book, where speaking of *Sicily*, he says that that Island;

*Tho' rich with Men and Fruit, has rarely shewn
A Thing more glorious than this single One;
His Verse, compos'd of Nature's Work, declare
His Wit was strong, and his Invention rare;
His Judgment deep and sound; whence some began,
And justly too, to think him more than Man.*

Him therefore our Poet carefully imitated; for what *Aristotle* says of *Empedocles*, that he writ in the same Style as *Homer*, and was a great Master of his own Language, as being full of Metaphors, and making use of all other Advantages that might conduce to the Beauty of his Poetry; all these Perfections, I say, tho' they are scarce to be found in any other of the *Latin* Poets, manifestly discover themselves in *Lucretius*: For he excels all the rest in Purity of Diction, and, if I may use the Expression, in Sublimity of Eloquence; besides, he has adorned his whole Poem with an infinite Number of excellent Metaphors, as with so many Badges of Distinction and Honour. *Tully*, who was well able to judge, calls him a very artful Poet; and would I had leisure enough to shew not only what he has borrowed from *Homer* and others

but chiefly from *Ennius*, whom of all the *Latin* Poets he most admired, and studied to imitate, but what *Virgil* has likewise taken from *Lucretius*; for that would make manifest what has been often said, that *Ennius* is the Grandfather, *Lucretius* the Father, and *Virgil* the Son, they being the most illustrious Triumvirate of the *Epick Latin* Poets.

HE goes on; There are many excellent Things contained in the Poem of *Lucretius*, nor is there in all his Works any Token or Footstep of Intemperance. How discreetly and strongly does he argue for the Restraint of Ambition, and for avoiding the Miseries of intestine Divisions and Civil Wars, the Calamities that in his Days afflicted the Republick of *Rome*? He extols Philosophy, and the Studies of the Wise in a Style incredibly sublime. How beautiful is his Poetry, when he treats of Serenity of Mind, and Contempt of Death? In how many Places, and in how excellent and almost Divine a Diction does he confute the Superstition of the Vulgar, and their fabulous Belief of the Torments of Hell? How elegantly does he detect the Frauds, and deride the Vanity of Astrologers? Not to mention with how great Severity he dissuades from Avarice, and shews many Ills that arise from the Greediness of Riches, nor how wholesome are his Instructions concerning Temperance, Frugality of Living, and Modesty of Apparel. As to what relates to the Restraint of the other Cupidities of the Mind, and sordid Pleasures of the Flesh, so excellent indeed are the Instructions he gives us, that what *Diogenes* writes of *Epicurus*, seems to be true, that he was falsely accused by some
for

for indulging himself too much in Pleasure and Voluptuousness, and that it was a downright Calumny in them to wrest his Meaning, and interpret what he meant of the Tranquillity of the Mind, as if it had been spoken of the Pleasures of the Body. Concerning some of the Phenomena of the Heavens, he advances indeed several Opinions that are false, or rather ridiculous, but yet they are consonant to the *Epicurean* Doctrine; and on the contrary, how true are many of his Notions concerning Thunder, the Nature, Force, and Swiftmess of Lightning, the Magnitude of the Sea, the Winds, and many other things of the like nature? With how wonderful a Sweetness does he sing the first Rise of the World, of the Earth, of the Heavens, and of all the several Kinds of Animals? As likewise the Origine of Speech, of Government, of Laws, and of all the Arts? How full and satisfactory are his Disputations of the Flames of Mount *Ætna*, and of the Causes of Diseases? How excellently has he described, as it were in a Picture, that memorable and dreadful Plague which desolated *Athens*, and the whole Country of *Attica*!

NOTWITHSTANDING these urgent and artful Apologies for the Works of *Lucretius*, his Poem must upon the whole be condemned as Obscene, Impious, and Atheistical, and be read with the utmost Wariness and Circumspection. No Writer ever attack'd the Divine Providence with more Boldness; he sets out with this profane Exordium,

*For whatso'er's Divine, must live in Peace,
In undisturb'd and everlasting Ease.*

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*Not Care for us, from Fears and Dangers free,
Sufficient to its own Felicity.*

*Nought here below, nought in our Power it needs,
Ne'er smiles at good, ne'er frowns at wicked Deeds.*

He goes on with giving infinite Praise to *Epicurus*, who insolently attack'd Religion, and triumph'd over it.

*Long time Men lay oppress'd with slavish Fear,
Religious Tyranny did domineer ;
Which being placed in Heaven, look'd proudly down,
And frighted abject Spirits with her Frown.*

*At last, a Mighty One of Greece began
To assert the nat'ral Liberty of Man.*

*By senseless Terrors and vain Fancies led
To Slav'ry ; strait the conquer'd Fantom fled ;
Not the fam'd Stories of the Deity,
Not all the Thunder of the threatening Sky,
Could stop his rising Soul ; thro' all he past
The strongest Bounds that pow'rful Nature cast ;
His vigorous and active Mind was hurl'd,
Beyond the flaming Limits of this World,
Into the mighty Space, and there did see,
How things begin, what can, what cannot be.
Thus by his Conquest we our Right regain,
Religion he subdu'd, and we now reign.*

I shall end this Character with the Opinion of *Dr. Burnet*, in his second Book *Of the Theory of the Earth* : *Lucretius*, he says, was an *Epicurean* more from his Inclination and the Bent of his Spirit, than from Reason or any Force of Argument. For tho' his Suppositions be very precarious, and his Reasonings all along very slight, he will many times strut and triumph, as if

if he had wrested the Thunder out of *Jove's* Right-hand; and a Mathematician is not more confident of his Demonstration, than he seems to be of the Truth of his shallow Philosophy. He was certainly in earnest in his Disbelief of the Immortality of the Soul, and a Future State; for he is said to have laid violent Hands upon himself. *And so most unhappily did his ingenious Translator likewise.*





CATULLUS.

CAIUS VALERIUS CATULLUS, a Roman Poet, was born at *Verona*, about eighty Years before the common *Æra*, and the six hundred and sixty sixth Year of *Rome*; *Giraldus* believes rather, he was born in the Peninsula *Sirmio*, formed by the Lake *Benacus* near *Verona*. His Descent was considerable, for his Father was a Man of Fortune, and was admitted into Friendship with *Julius Cæsar*, who usually lodged at his House. He was invited to *Rome* very young by *Manlius* a Nobleman, whom he celebrates in many of his Poems, and to whom he confessed he owed the greatest Obligations. The Elegance of his Style, and the Delicacy of his Compositions, introduced him into the Acquaintance of the best Judges, and the Beauty of his Verses procured him the Friendship and Consideration of the Learned, and of the fine Wits, who were then at *Rome* in great abundance.

His Writings inform us, that he had once contracted the closest Friendship with *Furius* and *Aurelius*, Men of some Quality and Distinction, who had run out their Fortunes by Extravagance. He represents them in his eleventh Epigram as ready to go to the End of the World, and into the wildest Places with him; but he says so many disobliging things of them in other Places,

that it cannot be thought their Friendship was of any Continuance; he represents them as open-mouthed Wolves, that having nothing to live upon, could never free themselves from Hunger.

Aureli, Pater Esuritionum, &c. Ep. 21.

Aurelius!

Father of Famine present and to come!

HE represents them as greedy of Sodomy as of Bread, and threatens them with a horrible Treatment, if they continued to slander him, and to debauch the Object of his Flame. He had afterwards, says *Muretus*, a grievous Quarrel with these two Persons, and satirized them in the bitterest Verses, because they had branded him with Effeminacy, and that *Aurelius* had indeed attempted a Youth whom *Catullus* loved, and *Furius* had actually debauched him. So that this Poet was stained with that unnatural Vice, and complied with that fashionable Impurity.

CATULLUS was of a gay amorous Disposition, and speaks with great Passion of two of his Mistresses, *Ispithilla* of *Verona* and *Clodia*, to whom he gave the Name of *Lesbia*, in honour to *Sappho* who was of the Island of *Lesbos*, and whose Verses pleased him wonderfully; he translated or imitated some of them: He speaks of his *Lesbia*, as of a very lascivious Lady, and introduces her asking him how many Kisses would satisfy him;

Quæris quot mihi Basiationes, &c.

Lesbia my fairest, you require

How many Kisses I desire, &c.

HE

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HE desired, he says, as many as there are Grains of Sand in the Desarts of *Lybia*, and Stars in the Heavens; but his *Lesbia* it seems became at last a common Prostitute:

Cæli, Lesbia illa, &c.

*Lesbia, my Friend, the beauteous She,
Who more than Life was dear to me,
Now plies in Alleys, and in Streets,
And lies with every Man she meets.*

It is said, that this lewd Woman was the Sister of the infamous *Clodius*, the great Enemy of *Cicero*.

HE suffer'd the common Fate of the Poetical Tribe, for he was poor all his Life-time; which, without doubt, was in some measure owing to the profligate Company he kept, and his extravagant Expences. He neither made his Fortune by his Verses, nor in his Travels into *Bitbynia* with *Memmius*, who had obtained the Government of it after his *Prætorship*. He composed a very passionate Epigram upon the Death of his Brother, for whose Loss he was inconsolable;

Tu mea, Tu moriens, &c. Epig. 46.

*Thy Death, my Brother, has undone my State;
Our Family lies buried in thy Fate.*

HE died in the Flower of his Age, and in the Height of his Reputation, about thirty Years old: *Scaliger's* Opinion cannot be supported, who says he lived above seventy one Years; about this time *Virgil* was pursuing his Studies at *Cremona*. The Poem upon *Lesbia's* Sparrow, some pretend

pretend he dedicated to *Virgil*; this Conjecture is founded upon two Verses of *Martial* that are certainly misunderstood,

*Sic forsan tener ausus est Catullus,
Magna mittere passerem Maroni.*

As if *Catullus* had presumed to send his Sparrow to Great *Maro* as his Friend. *Martial* there addresses himself to *Silius Italicus*, a celebrated Poet, and one of his Patrons; he compliments him as if he had said, I presume to inscribe this little Piece to you, as *Catullus* might have presented his Poem on *Lesbia's* Sparrow to the great *Virgil*, had they flourished at the same time. It is evident, that *Martial* professed the greatest Veneration for the Excellencies of *Catullus*;

*Tantum magna suo debet Verona Catullo,
Quantum parva suo Mantua Virgilio.*

THIS Poet contracted a Friendship with *Cicero*, who is said upon some Occasion to plead as a Publick Advocate for him; and notwithstanding the Friendship between *Julius Cæsar* and his Father, he severely lampoon'd that Emperor, in the Person of *Mamurra* one of his Favourites, and a Surveyor of his Workmen in *Gaul*. The Verses were very satirical, they lashed the severe Robberies of *Mamurra*, and the lewd Intercourse, supposed to have passed between him and *Cæsar*:

Quis hoc potest videre &c.

Ep. 30.

*Who but a Wretch as vile can bear to see
Mamurra riot thus in Luxury?*

Rich

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*Rich with the Spoils, and plunder'd Wealth he bore,
From long-hair'd Gaul, and distant Britain's Shore,
The Pathic Roman, who unmov'd can see
Such wanton Riot, is as base as He.*

THE fifty eighth Epigram is yet more severe
*Pulchrè convenit improbis Cinædis,
Mamurrhæ Pathicoque Cæsarique.*

*This suits with impious Pathicks well,
Cæsar and vile Mamurrha —*

CÆSAR upon this occasion behaved with his usual Generosity and Moderation; he was not silent indeed at the Injury he received, but obliging the Poet to make a slight Satisfaction, which he accepted; he invited him (says *Suetonius*) the same day to Supper, and continued to lodge at his Father's House as he had done before.

THE Works of *Catullus* are inscribed to *Cornelius Nepos*, whom he compliments on his Writing a general History in three Books *Omne ævum tribus explicare Chartis*. We have not all his Pieces, *Crinitus* speaks of an *Ithyphallic* Poem, or Verses upon the Impure Divinity of *Priapus*, and *Pliny* ascribes to him a Poem upon Incantments used to make one's self beloved: This Subject had been treated of before him by *Theocritus*, and after him by *Virgil*. The Poem of the *Vigil of Venus* is falsely attributed to him. His early Death must be lamented by all true Lovers of Wit and Learning, since it has robbed us of many Improvements which he was likely to have made in this kind of Poetry; I mean his *Hendecasyllables*, where he seems to excel most: There are some finished Pieces of his

his that are inimitable in their kind : Such is the Poem upon *Lesbia's* Sparrow, and that on *Acme* and *Septimius* ; the Translation of *Callimachus's* Elegy on Queen *Berenice's* Hair also is an excellent Piece. His Lyric Poems are many of them well written, particularly the *Carmen Seculare*. *Scaliger* thinks he was too critical and exact, and too strict an Observer of the *Roman* Elegancies. He is generally esteemed the best Writer in the Epigrammatick Style.

AN Epigram of all the Works in Verse that Antiquity has produced, is the least considerable ; it is of no Worth at all, unless it be admirable, and it is so rare to see such a one, that it's sufficient to have made one in a Man's whole Life ; and yet this Manner of Writing has its Beauty. This Beauty consists either in the delicate Turn, or in a lucky Word. The *Greeks* have understood this sort of Poesy otherwise than the *Latins* : The *Greek* Epigram runs upon the Turn of a Thought that is natural, but fine and subtle ; the *Latin* Epigram by a false Taste that sway'd in the beginning of the Decay of the pure Latinity, endeavours to surprize the World by some nipping Word, which is called a *Point*. *Catullus* writ after the former manner, which is of a finer Character, for he endeavour to close a natural Thought within a delicate Turn of Words, and within the Simplicity of a very soft Expression. *Martial* was in some manner the Author of this other way, that is to say, to terminate an ordinary Thought by some Word that is surprising. Judges of a good Taste have always preferred the way of *Catullus* before that of *Martial*, there being more of true Delicacy in that than in this. And in these latter Ages we have
seen

seen a noble *Venetian*, named *Andreas Naugerius*, who had an exquisite Discernment, and who by a natural Antipathy against all that which is called *Point*, which he judged to be of an ill Relish, sacrificed every Year in Ceremony a Volume of *Martial's* Epigrams to the *Manes* of *Catullus*, in honour to his Character.

THIS Poet has been censured for the Lewdness of some of his Pieces; the Looseness of his Thoughts, and his fulsome Expressions have given great Offence, and obliged his Judges to conclude that he must have been a profligate Debauchee. But *Bayle* makes an Apology for him; he says, that the ancient *Romans* had not laid down those Rules of Politeness, which at present make those who compose obscene Verses fall into publick Contempt. *Catullus* therefore did his Character no great Harm by the gross Obscenities and infamous Impurities, with which he poison'd many of his Poems. *Pliny* the Younger is of the same Opinion: it seems Obscenity, according to the Ancients, was not only allowable in these sort of Compositions, but when artfully dressed up, was esteemed one of its greatest Beauties. *Catullus* wrote by this Rule,

Nam castum esse decet, &c. Lyric. 17.

*The Poet, I confess, should chaste appear,
Then may his luscious Lines affect the Ear,
Divert with wanton Pleasantry the Mind;
Not over-moest, but to Love inclin'd.*

WE are told by *Grinitus*, that *Catullus* had so great a Reputation for Learning, that by the Consent of the best Judges, the Epithet of
Doctus

Doctus was affixed to his Name. *Ovid* thought that for Majesty and Loftiness of Verse, he was no way inferiour to *Virgil* himself; and tho' both the *Plinys* have condemned *Catullus's* Verse as harsh and unpleasant, yet he has generally been accounted a most elegant Poet, and has had several who have copied after him. The sweetest and most polite of all the Poets, if he appears at any time hard and rough, especially in his *Epicks*, yet he has made sufficient amends by his wonderful pleasant Wit, and by his pure Elegancy in the *Roman* Language. His Contemporaries called him *the Learned*, because he knew how to translate into *Latin* Verse the most beautiful and delicate Pieces in the *Greek* Poets, which before him was thought impossible to be done.

THE Reputation of *Catullus* sinks very low in the Opinion of *Julius Scaliger*, he can upon no account imagine the Reason, why this Poet was distinguish'd by the Ancients with the Title of *the Learned*; he does not see any thing in his Pieces but what is common and ordinary. His Style, he says, is generally hard and unpolished, though indeed sometimes it flows like Water, but has no Strength. He is often very immodest, and puts him out of countenance; sometimes he is so very languid and faint, that he cannot but pity him; and he is often under such Difficulties and Constraint, that he is exceedingly troubled and concerned for him.



VIRGIL.



V I R G I L.

PUBLIUS VIRGILIUS MARO, the most excellent of all the ancient *Roman* Poets, flourish'd in the Time of *Augustus* ; he was born on the fifteenth of *October*, in the Year of *Rome* Six hundred eighty-three, in a Village called *Andes*, about three Miles from *Mantua*. His Father was a Man of low Fortune, his Name is unknown, but it is said he was by Trade a Basket-maker ; his Mother's Name was *Maja*. A Poet of his extraordinary Character must not be born without some extraordinary Circumstances attending upon his Nativity. His Mother therefore dream'd that she was deliver'd of an Olive-branch, which was no sooner set in the Ground, but it took root, and sprung up into a Tree, abounding with Fruit and Blossoms ; and going out next day to a neighbouring Village with her Husband, she was obliged to stop by the way, and was deliver'd of him in a Ditch. The Child is said not to have cried upon his first coming into the World like other Infants, but shew'd such a smiling Countenance, as promised something extraordinary. A Branch of Poplar (according to the Custom of the Country)

try) was planted where his Mother was deliver'd of him, which sprung up and grew so fast, that it soon came up to the Size of the other Trees set thereabouts long before it. This Tree was called after his Name and consecrated to him, which gave occasion to a great deal of Superstition in the neighbouring Parts, especially among the *Tuscans*.

AT seven Years of Age he was sent by some Friends he found, to study at *Cremona*, a *Roman* Colony; after which he made some stay at *Milan*, and then went to *Naples*, where he studied with the greatest Diligence the *Latin* and *Greek* Literature, as he did afterwards the *Mathematicks* and *Natural Philosophy*. He learned *Greek* under *Parthenius* of *Nicæa*, and his Master for *Philosophy* was *Syro*, one of the greatest Men of the *Epicurean* Sect, tho' *Virgil*, upon maturer Judgment, became a Follower of the *Platonic* System.

AFTER some Time spent in his Studies, his Curiosity and Desire of Knowledge led him to travel through *Italy*, when it is supposed he went to *Rome*. Then we are told he published his sixth Eclogue, which *Roscius* rehearsing upon the *Roman* Theatre, *Cicero* in admiration called him

———— *Magnæ spes altera Romæ.*

His Pastorals, says *Donatus*, were so well received by the Publick, that they were frequently sung on the Stage. Now when *Cicero* had heard some of the Verses, presently discovering by his acute Penetration that the Author was no ordinary Genius, he ordered the whole Eclogue to

to be rehearsed from the beginning, which having strictly attended to, he said at the Conclusion, *The other Hope of mighty Rome*; as if he himself were the *first Hope* of the *Latin Tongue*, and *Virgil* would be the second. These Words were afterwards inserted in the *Æneis*. The Truth of this Account is justly disputed, Mr. *Bayle* observes that here is an Error in Chronology; for it is certain that *Virgil* did not write his Eclogues till after the Triumvirate of *Octavius*, *Marc Antony*, and *Lepidus*, during which, it is well known, *Cicero* was barbarously murdered.

THE small Patrimony that *Virgil* had in *Italy*, he lost by a Decree of *Augustus*, who divided that Part of the Country among his Soldiers; and our young Poet was here involved in the common Calamity. He applied himself upon this Occasion to *Varus*, with whom he had studied and contracted a close Friendship. He recommended him to *Pollio*, then Governour of the Province, whose Favour introduced him into the Court of *Augustus*. From this Prince and Protector of Learning, he obtained a Grant by which his Lands were exempt from the general Division, as he declares in the first Eclogue.

Hic illum vidi, &c.

*There first the Youth of heavenly Birth I view'd,
To whom our Monthly Victims are renew'd.
He heard my Vows, had graciously decreed
My Grounds to be restored, my Flocks to feed.*

When he came to take possession of his little Estate, one *Arius* a Centurion, to whose Lot
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his Lands were fallen, not only refused to comply with the Emperor's Mandate, but likewise used him so roughly, that he was forc'd to save his Life by swimming over the *Mincius*, and hasten back to Court, where he soon obtain'd full Redress and Satisfaction.

SOME Authors lay an Imputation upon this Poet, and say he was far from being chaste in his Youth; when others assure us that he was so modest, so reserved and regular in his Words and Deportment, that the Inhabitants of *Naples* gave him a Surname derived from *Virginity*, by reason of the Purity of his Words and Manners. We are told he was so modest, that he preferred living retired in the Country to residing at *Rome* where he was admired. He seldom went thither, and so little affected appearing there, that when he observed he was followed and shewed, he ran into the first House he found open. It is certain that in his Youth he wrote some lascivious Verses; for *Pliny*, who had done so likewise, justifies himself by many great Examples, particularly by that of *Virgil*. The Writer of his Life makes him the Author of the *Priapeia*, and some learned Men will have the Piece, which is still extant under this Name, to be really *Virgil's*; but it seems rather to be a Collection of Poems, the Works of various Authors. The Gravity and Modesty which reign throughout the *Æneid*, are indeed admirable. His *Bucolics* are not so modest, he there relates very criminal Passions, but that is no Proof he was infected with them. The Passion for Boys was not less common in the Pagan Times, than that for Girls, so that a Writer of Eclogues may make his Shepherds talk

talk according to this cursed Fashion, without relating his own Adventures, or approving the Passions he mentioned. It is certain there are many Stories that reflect upon the Reputation of this Poet; he is charged with the unnatural Sin, with loving *Alexis*, a Favourite of *Mecænas*, but they are represented only as Reports, founded upon Envy and Ill-nature. It is said particularly, that *Varus* the Tragic Poet married a very learned Woman who lay with *Virgil*, and to whom he gave a Tragedy of his composition, which she made her Husband believe was her own, and that *Varus* recited it as her own Performance. It is farther added, that the Poet obscurely alludes to this Adventure in three Verses of his third Eclogue;

An mihi cantando, &c.

*An honest Man may freely take his own,
The Goat was mine, by singing fairly won;
A solemn Match was made, he lost the Prize;
Ask Damon, ask, if he the Debt denies.*

But *Servius* rejects this as an Allegory which no Author had mentioned, and which was directly opposite to the Nature of Pastoral Poetry.

VIRGIL was received into the strictest Intimacy by the chief Wits of the Court of *Augustus*; for by means of *Pollio* he was admitted into the Favour and Friendship of *Mecænas* and *Augustus*, who not only placed him above Want, but qualified him to enjoy his Studies, and to retire to *Naples* for the sake of his Health, for the Air of *Rome* was disagreeable to his Constitution. Here he wrote his *Georgicks*, the Subject

ject of which was very pleasing to *Augustus*, who encouraged the People to cultivate and improve their Lands, which had suffered so much during the Civil Wars in *Italy* that lasted for many Years. He spent three Years on his *Eclogues*, but his *Georgicks* took him up seven; in compiling of this Work, he dictated several of the Verses of it in a Morning, and spent the rest of the Day in correcting, and reducing them to a smaller Number; for upon this Account he usually compared himself to a She-Bear, who is at first deliver'd of a shapeless Lump, which she afterwards licks into Form. He finish'd this Piece when *Augustus* was upon his Return from the Conquest of *Egypt*, which he reduced into a Province, and made *Gallus*, another of *Virgil's* Patrons, Governour of it. This *Gallus* was perhaps the finest Elegiack Writer among the *Romans*, but his Works are now lost; those that are extant under his Name being rejected by the best Criticks for a modern Composition. *Donatus* in the Life of *Virgil* says, that *Virgil* was four Days imploy'd in reading the *Georgicks* to *Augustus*, after his Return from the Battle of *Actium*, while he remained at *Atella* for the Recovery of his Strength. *Mecænas* relieved him in the Task of Reading, as often as his Voice failed him. There was a wonderful Charm, and a very great Sweetness in his Pronunciation. *Seneca* relates that *Julius Montanus* the Poet was used to say, that if he could violently seize upon any thing belonging to *Virgil*, it should be his Voice, his Countenance, and his Action; for the same Verses which sounded well by his Pronunciation, did without that seem dry and insipid.

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VIRGIL began the *Æneid* in the forty-second Year of his Age; this Poem was composed to convince the *Romans* of the Prerogative of *Augustus*. The Hero of the Work is taken from the *Iliad*, where we have the Character of *Æneas* in the same Light of Actions and moral Behaviour, as we find him in the *Æneid*, free from all Violence, Pious, and Good; and in this was exactly drawn the Character of *Augustus*. The *Æneid* is a Copy, as *Macrobius* observes, of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*; the Voyage is taken from the *Odyssey*, the Battles from the *Iliad*. The first six Books of this Poem took him up seven Years. We are told that when *Augustus* was abroad in the Expedition against the *Cantabri*, he frequently solicited *Virgil* by Letters, to send him, as his Expression was, the first Lineament of his Poem, which he refused at first, but at length complied to recite three whole Books to him, the second, the fourth, and sixth. The Elogy upon *Marcus Claudius Marcellus*, the Son of *Octavia* the Emperor's Sister, who died in the Flower of his Age, is inserted in the sixth Book with so much Skill, and so admirably well turned, that *Octavia* when she heard it fell into a Swoon at the Words *Tu Marcellus eris*, and was brought to herself with great difficulty. When she recovered she ordered the Poet ten thousand Sesterces for every Line, which, for less than thirty Verses, amounted to Two thousand one Hundred Pounds and upwards of our Money.

He employed the rest of his Life in perfecting his Poem of the *Æneid*, which he finish'd in about four Years; but it never received his last Hand, being prevented by Death. He proposed

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to bestow a Retirement of three Years in polishing it ; after which he intended to apply the Remainder of his Life in the Studies of Philosophy. He set out for Greece, and in his Journey he met *Augustus* at *Athens*, who was then returning from the East. This determin'd him to return into *Italy* with the Emperor ; but his Curiosity carrying him to *Megara*, he was there seized with a languishing Distemper, which increasing upon him in his Passage, he arrived at *Brundisium* in such an ill state of Health, that he died on the twenty-second of *September*, about the fifty-fourth Year of his Age.

WHEN he found his Distemper increased, he earnestly asked for his Manuscripts in order to commit his *Æneis* to the Flames, and because no body was so complaisant as to bring them, he ordered by his last Will that they should be burnt as an imperfect Work. *Tucca* and *Varius* represented to him that *Augustus* would never suffer it. Upon this he bequeathed his Writings to them, on Condition they should add nothing to them, and should if they found any unfinished Verses, leave them in the same Condition : So that *Augustus* was no farther the Cause of the Preservation of this Poem, than that the Author desisted from his Resolution, being told that this Prince would not suffer the Execution of it. It redounded greatly, says *Bayle*, to the Glory of this Monarch, that he discovered himself seriously interested in it, and that he oblig'd *Varius* to that punctual Performance of the Condition under which the Manuscript was left to him. There is an Epigram extant, composed by *Apollinaris*, a Grammarian,

rian, upon the Order given by *Virgil* to burn his *Æneid*. It is but a single Distich:

*Infelix alio cecidit prope Pergamon igne ;
Et pæne est alio Troja cremata Rogo.*

Troy almost perish'd in a second Flame.

His Corps, as he requested, was transported to *Naples*, and there buried.

VIRGIL was tall and of a swarthy Complexion, of a clownish ungraceful Air, awkward and ungenteel in his Deportment; this was partly owing to the Obscurity of his Birth, and in some measure to his ill state of Health, which allowing him the Use of little or no Exercise, robbed him of those Graces of Body that are owing to it. His Constitution was weak, which oblig'd him to eat little, and to drink no Wine. He was peevish in his Humour, subject to violent Head-aches, and so Asthmatick, that he was forced to fly the Smoke of *Rome*, and retire to the soft Air of *Naples*, where he spent most of the latter Part of his Life. However, he was a Man of much Humanity, Gratitude, and Good-nature. He was bountiful to his Parents, and generous to his Relations; and yet died very rich, leaving behind him near Seventy-five thousand Pounds, which by his Will was one half to be distributed among his Relations, and the other to *Mecænas*, *Tucca*, and *Varius*, besides a considerable Legacy to *Augustus*, that politick Prince having introduced a Custom of being in every body's Will. He was not insensible to the Passion of Love, as appears by the Episode of *Dido*

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and *Aeneas*, where he treats that Passion with more delicacy than *Anacreon*, and as much Softness as *Ovid*. He was so fond of Retirement, that he became not only the greatest Poet, but the greatest Philosopher, Historian, Antiquary, and Scholar of his Age. He had naturally a great Hesitation in his Speech, which was the Reason he left the Bar, where he never pleaded but once. He is said to have written his own Epitaph:

*Mantua me genuit, Calabri rapuere, tenet nunc
Parthenope; cecini Pasqua, Rura, Duces.*

THE genuine and undisputed Works of this Poet are ten *Eclogues*, or *Bucolicks*, four Books of *Georgicks*, and the *Aeneid*, consisting of twelve Books; this Poem is unfinish'd, for *Scaliger* asserts that he intended to have added twelve more Books in imitation of *Homer*.

NEVER any Man possessed all the Graces of Poesy in so eminent a Degree as *Virgil*; he had an admirable Taste for what is natural, an exquisite Judgment for the Contrivance, an incomparable Delicacy for the Numbers and Harmony of Versification. He not only, says *Scaliger*, excelled all human Wit, but raised himself to a kind of Equality with Nature it self. He constantly follows Nature, and *Homer* her faithful Interpreter; so that he is admirable upon every Subject, and Master of all Styles. He keeps to the Characters and Humours of the Shepherds of those Ages in his Pastorals, with such Plainness and Propriety, such Pleasantness and suitable Easiness of Expression, that one would think he had lived among those happy People, and been long acquainted with the Care

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of their Flocks, their Amours and harmless Differences. In his *Georgicks* he raises his Style, and describes the Art of Tillage, the Government of the Bees, and all the Affairs of the Husbandman, with such sound Judgment, suitable Language and proper Heightenings of Fancy, that every skilful Professor of Agriculture must admire him, for the First of his Excellencies, and every learned Critick for the two next. In his Heroic Poem he has come so near *Homer*, that he has raised himself far above all other Poets. Not to mention the Propriety and Sublimity of his Thought, the manly Elegance and majestic Conciseness of his Expression, he is very admirable in the judicious and most agreeable Variety of his Numbers. In that Excellency he does not in the least yield to the glorious *Grecian*, tho' he had the Disadvantage in his Language; *Latin* being a Tongue more close and severe than *Greek*; neither having different Dialects as that has, nor allowing that Latitude and Liberty of Variation which that does. The Plan of his Epic Poem is so noble and regular, his Conduct so prudent, his Characters so just and accurate, and his Ornaments so becoming, that both *Mæcenas* and *Augustus*, two of the compleatest Statesmen and Scholars in the World, must allow the *Æneid* to be a Master-piece. All the World acknowledgeth the *Æneid* to be most perfect in its kind, and considering the Disadvantage of the Language, and the Severity of the *Roman* Muse, the Poem is still more wonderful, since without the Liberty of the *Grecian* Poets the Diction is so great and noble, so clear, so forcible and expressive, so chaste and pure, that even all the Strength and

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Compass of the *Greek* Tongue joined to *Homer's* Fire, cannot give us stronger and clearer Ideas, than the great *Virgil* has set before our Eyes, some few Instances excepted, in which *Homer* thro' the Force of Genius hath excelled.

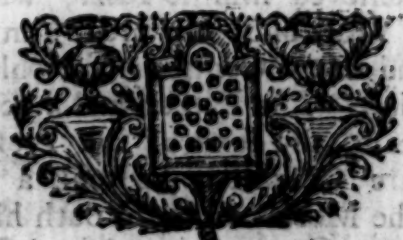
VIRGIL has been often compared with *Homer*, and the Merits of those Poets frequently canvassed. No Author, or Man, ever excelled all the World in more than one Faculty; and as *Homer* has done this in Invention, *Virgil* has in Judgment. Not that we are to think *Homer* wanted Judgment, because *Virgil* had it in a more eminent Degree; or that *Virgil* wanted Invention, because *Homer* possessed a larger Share of it. Each of these great Authors had more of both perhaps than any Man besides, and are only said to have less in Comparison with one another. *Homer* was a greater Genius, *Virgil* the better Artist. In one we most admire the Man, in the other the Work. *Homer* hurries and transports us with a commanding Impetuosity, *Virgil* leads us with an attractive Majesty. *Homer* scatters with a generous Profusion, *Virgil* bestows with a careful Magnificence. *Homer*, like the *Nile*, pours out his Riches with a sudden Overflow, *Virgil* like a River in its Banks, with a gentle and constant Stream. When we behold their Battles, methinks the two Poets resemble the Heroes they celebrate. *Homer*, boundless and irresistible as *Achilles*, bears all before him, and shines more and more as the Tumult increases; *Virgil* calmly daring, like *Aeneas*, appears undisturb'd in the midst of the Action, disposes all about him, and conquers with tranquillity. And when we look upon their Machines, *Homer* seems like his own *Jupiter* in
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his Terrors, shaking *Olympus*, scattering the Lightnings and firing the Heavens; *Virgil*, like the same Power in his Benevolence, counselling with the Gods, laying Plans for Empires, and regularly ordering his whole Creation.

DRYDEN speaks of *Virgil* as a grave, succinct and majestick Writer, one who weigh'd not only every Thought, but every Word and Syllable; who was still aiming to crowd his Sense into as narrow a Compass as possible he could; for which Reason he is so very figurative, that he requires (as it were) a Grammar apart to construe him. His Verse is every where sounding the very thing in your Ears, whose Sense it bears; yet the Numbers are perpetually varied to encrease the Delight of the Reader, so that the same Sounds are never repeated twice together. But though he is smooth where Smoothness is required, yet he is so far from affecting it, that he seems rather to disdain it; for he frequently makes use of *Synalepha's*, and concludes his Sense in the middle of his Verse. He is every where above the Concepts of Epigrammatick Wit, and gross Hyperboles. He maintains Majesty in the midst of Plainness; he shines, but glares not, and is stately without Ambition, which is the Vice of *Lucan*. *Martial* says of him, that he could have excelled *Varius* in Tragedy, and *Horace* in Lyrick Poety; but out of Deference to his Friends he attempted neither.

SIR William Temple says, he does not wonder that the famous *Dr. Harvey*, when he was reading *Virgil*, should sometimes throw him down upon the Table, and say, *He had a Devil*. Among the Follies of *Caligula* we may

may undoubtedly reckon his Contempt and Hatred of this Poet, whose Writings and Effigies he endeavoured to remove out of all Libraries; he had the Confidence to say, that *Virgil* had neither Wit nor Learning. The Emperor *Alexander Severus* judged quite otherwise, he called him the *Plato* of the Poets, and placed his Picture with that of *Cicero* in the Temple, in which he had placed *Achilles* and other great Men. He was so much respected by the Senate and People of *Rome*, that when they heard any of his Verses in the Theatre, every body immediately stood up; and if by chance *Virgil* was present, *Tacitus* says, they gave him the same respect as they did to *Cæsar* himself.





H O R A C E.

QUINTUS HORATIUS FLACCUS was born at *Venusium*, a City of *Italy*, in the beginning of *December*, about the Year of *Rome* Six hundred eighty-eight, three Years after the Conspiracy of *Catiline*. His Father is said to be a *Salter*, and the Son of a *Freedman*, and a *Tax-gatherer* : The Circumstances of his Fortune were not straitned, and observing an early Forwardness in his Son, he resolved to furnish him with a suitable Education, and for that purpose removed him to *Rome*, when he was about ten Years old. He bred him in the best School, and in the Company of Noblemen of the first Quality. The Father had a good Share of natural Sense, and fond of the Prospect of his Son's future Character, he took a pleasure in forming the Morals of the Youth himself ; and all the Virtue, Generosity, and good Conduct that were so remarkable in the Life of this excellent Poet, were principally owing to the Care and Cultivation of the best of Fathers, as the Son in many Places of his Works very gratefully confesses.

Si neque Avaritiam, &c. Sat. VI. Lib. I.

If

*If none on me can truly fix Disgrace,
 If I am neither Covetous nor Base;
 If innocent my Life; if, to commend
 My self, I live below'd by every Friend,
 I thank my Father for't.*

WHEN he was about eighteen he was sent to Athens, where he compleated what his Father had so well begun, and acquired all those Accomplishments that polite Learning, added to an ingenuous Education, could afford him. Brutus about this time going into Macedonia, and being under great Difficulties to furnish his Army with Officers, took Horace into his Service, and made him a Tribune; but he shamefully fled at the Battle of Philippi, and, which was the most inglorious Action in a Soldier, he threw away his Shield. This he confesses himself in an Ode to his Friend Pompeius Varus, who was with him in that Battle, and was his Companion in Flight.

Tecum Philippi, &c.

*The bloody Wars, Philippi's Field,
 Ignobly having lost my Shield,
 With thee I saw secure from Wound,
 I saw the Fight, when Pompey proud,
 To Cæsar's stronger Vertue bow'd,
 And basely bit the bloody Ground.*

It is supposed that Horace would scarce have been so ingenuous as to confess this infamous Adventure, if he had not had the Examples of two great Poets, Archilochus and Alcaeus, before him

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him who both own'd themselves guilty of the same Cowardice.

THE general Rout at *Philippi* reduced this run-away Tribune to the greatest Distress; for his Estate was forfeited and became a Prey to the Conquerors. He was naturally indolent, and loved Retirement, but Necessity oblig'd him to write, and his Muse so successfully assisted him, that she soon introduced him into the most polite Company. He soon became acquainted with *Virgil*, who recommended him to *Mecenas*, the general Patron of Learning in that Age. This great Courtier spokè favourably of him to *Augustus*, who was so taken with his Merit and Address, that he made him his chief Confident in his private Pleasures and Diversions, offer'd him Honours and Advantages, which he in a great measure refused, and restored him to the Possession of his Estate. Growing still more intimate with *Mecenas*, he had the Opportunity to discover all the amiable Parts of his Character, which wonderfully endeared his Patron to him, and made him conceive a very tender Friendship for him. The continued Favour of the Emperor furnish'd our Poet with such a Competency, as left him at full liberty to retire, and enjoy the Fruits of the Imperial Bounty. He sensibly in many places describes the Pleasures of a Country Life, and the Delights of his little Villa, or Seat at *Tibur*, and that in the Country of the *Tarentines*. His Love of Retirement increasing with his Age, he took up the Resolution at length of leaving the City, and spent the Remainder of his Days in the Ease and Privacy of a rural Life. He died about fifty-seven, on the twenty-seventh.

seventh of November; his Friend *Mecænas* died the beginning of the same Month. *Horace* did not survive long enough to write his Elegy, he was so nearly affected with his Loss, that it helped to shorten his Life. He was buried near *Mecænas's* Tomb, and by his last Words declared *Augustus* his Heir, the Violence of his Distemper being such, that he was not capable to sign his Will. He was wholly indifferent to any magnificent Funeral Rites, or fruitless Sorrows for his Death; he was confident of Immortality from his Works.

—*Absint inani funere nœniæ, &c. Lib. II. Od. 20.*

Say not I died, nor shed a Tear;
Nor round my Ashes mourn;
Nor of my needless Obsequies take care;
All Pomp and State is lost upon an empty Urn.

HORACE was of a chearful Temper, fond of Ease and Liberty, but ready to serve his Friend, and grateful to his Benefactors; of a tender and amorous Disposition; warm and passionate, but soon pacified. He was gay, and gave far into the Gallantries of the Age, till Time stole in upon his Amours; but even fifty could not save him. Love returned to the Charge, and after he had for some time bid farewell to it, made him feel his Power. After this Attack he seems to have master'd his Passions, and from this time lived in an undisturb'd and philosophical Tranquillity. He loved good Company and a chearful Glass, but being a Person of an elegant Taste in Conversation, he affected an intire Freedom, and that the

the Glass should circulate, or stand still at the Discretion of his Guests. He was very short and corpulent, as *Augustus* in a Letter to him informs us, comparing him to the Book he sent him, which was a little thick Volume. He was grey-headed about forty, of a weak Complexion and subject to have sore Eyes, which made him use little Exercise, and he was better able to bear Heat than Cold. This made him spend the Winter Season at *Tarentum*, that lies in the warmest Climate of all *Italy*.

Corporis exigui, præcanum, solibus aptum.

*Grown Grey before the time, I hate the Cold;
And seek the Warmth*

The Works of *Horace* consist of five Books of *Odes*, his *Carmen Seculare*, two Books of *Satires*, two of *Epistles*, and his Letter to the two *Piso's* upon the *Art of Poetry*. The *Ode*, says *Rapin*, ought to have as much Nobleness, Elevation and Transport, as the *Eclogue* has of Simplicity and Modesty. 'Tis not only the Wit that heightens it, but likewise the Matter, for its Use is to sing the Praises of the Gods, and to celebrate the illustrious Actions of Great Men, so it requires to sustain all the Majesty of its Character, an exalted Nature, a great Wit, a daring Fancy, an Expression noble and sparkling, yet pure and correct. All the Briskness and Life which Art has by its Figures, is not sufficient to heighten the *Ode* so far as its Character requires. But the Reading alone of *Pindar* is more capable to inspire this Genius, than all the Reflections in the World. *Horace* found the

the Art to join all the Force and high Flights, of *Pindar* with all the Sweetness and Delicacy of *Anacreon*, to make himself a new Character by uniting the Perfections of the other two. For besides that he had a Wit naturally pleasant, he had Nobleness in his Conceits, and Delicacy in his Thoughts and Sentiments. The Parts of his Odes that he was willing to finish, are always Master-pieces, but it requires a very clear Apprehension to discern all his Wit; there are many secret Graces and hidden Beauties in his Verse, that few can discover. He is the only *Latin* Author that writ well in that Verse among the Ancients.

HORACE, says *Scaliger*, is the most exact and elaborate of all the *Greek* and *Latin* Poets; his *Lyrics* have an harmonious and majestick Sound; his *Odes* are so full of Fancy and Beauty, so much Purity in the Style, so great a Variety, and such new Turns in the Figures, that they are not only Proof against the Censure of Criticks, but also above the highest Encomiums. These Compositions of his are of several sorts, they are either Moral, Panegyric, or Bacchanalian; in his Lyrick Poems upon Divine Matters, he is grave and majestick; in those which contain the Praise of his Heroes, pompous and sublime; in those that relate to Pleasure and free Enjoyment, gay and lively. In his *Iambics* he is severe and cutting. That which will distinguish his Style from all other Poets, is the Elegance of his Words, and Numerousness of his Verse; there is nothing so delicately turned in all the *Roman* Language. There appears in every Part of his Diction, or (to speak *English*) in all his Expressions, a

2

kind

kind of noble and bold Purity. His Words are chosen with as much Exactness as *Virgil's*, but there seems to be a greater Spirit in them. There is a secret Happiness attends his Choice, which in *Petronius* is called *Curiosa Felicitas*, which I suppose he had from the *felicitate Audere* of *Horace* himself. But the most distinguishing Part of all his Character seem to be his Briskness, his Jollity, and his Good-humour. His *Carmen Seculare* he composed at the express Command of *Augustus Cæsar*.

HORACE by his natural Temper was inclinable to Satire, but rather to genteel Raille-ry than sharp Reproaches; he seems capable by his Genius of any thing, but chiefly applied himself to Satire, by the Tendency of his natural Gaiety, which made him rally so pleasantly upon all Occasions. He had found in his Nature the Seeds of this Character, which he afterwards cultivated with so much success: And being a Courtier himself, and a little loose in his Morals, I mean the Practice, it was Prudence in him to indulge his Vein rather in exposing the Fopperies and Absurdities of the Age, than scourging its Vices, which were certainly great and numerous enough, tho' Men had not yet triumph'd in such open and monstrous Enormities, as must dishonour any other Reign but that of *Nero* and *Domitian*. He was not a proper Man to arraign the scandalous Vices, at least if the Stories which we hear of him are true, that he practised some of them, which out of honour to him, I forbear to mention. It was not for a *Clodius* to accuse Adulterers, especially when *Augustus* was of that Number; so that, tho' his Age was not exempt from the worst

worst of Villanies, yet our Poet was not fit to represent them in an odious Character, because himself was dipt in some of the same Actions.

THIS Poet has peculiarly adapted the Style of his Verse to the Design of his Work, it is nearly allied to Prose in his Satires and Epistles. By this means he pursues his Subject more closely, and reasons without declaiming. He ransacked the Schools of the Philosophers, and extracted from them a Sett of admirable Principles for the Direction of Human Life. There is not, says *Blondel*, any thing among the Ancients, which is more proper to imprint upon the Mind true Sentiments of moral Honesty, than the Works of *Horace*. His Advice is applicable to all Occasions, he includes in his Discourses not only all the Rules of Morality, but also of civil Conversation. He is teaching us in every Line, and is perpetually Moral; he had found out the Skill of *Virgil* to hide his Sentences, to give you the Virtue of them without shewing them in their full Extent. Folly was the proper Quarry of *Horace*, and not Vice; and as there are but few notoriously wicked Men, in comparison with a Shoal of Fools and Fops, so 'tis a harder thing to make a Man wise than to make him honest. His Divine Wit left nothing untouch'd, he enter'd into the inmost Recesses of Nature, found out the Imperfections even of the most Wise and Grave, as well as of the Common People. He laughs to shame all Follies, and insinuates Virtue rather by familiar Examples, than by Severity of Precepts. His Satires and Epistles, besides their Salt and Spirit, have the Air of a genteel Negligence, and unforced Easiness, which no Study or Diligence of Imitation

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tion can reach. There is that Purity of Style and Pleasantry of Humour, that are no less admirable and entertaining in their kind, than the Grandeur of *Virgil*. He every where shews himself to be a Scholar and a Critick, a Gentleman and a Courtier. His Sprightliness of Imagination is temper'd with Judgment, and he is both a pleasant Wit, and a Man of Prudence. If he had undertaken an *Epic Poem*, no doubt but he had succeeded. That Passage is wonderfully commended, wherein he gallantly pleads his Incapacity for *Heroic Poetry* in lofty and Heroick Lines ;

—*Cupidum, Pater optime, Vires
Deficiunt, nec enim quivis horrentia pilis
Agmina, nec fractâ pereuntes cuspide Gallos,
Aut labentis equo describit vulnera Parthia.*

*I have the Will, but when I strive to fly,
My Wing's too weak, nor can I fly so high.
For 'tis not every one can paint a War,
How Iron Armies dreadful gay appear,
The Galli falling by a braver Force,
Or wounded Parthians tumbling from their Horse.*

HIS *Tract de Arte Poeticâ*, which is really no more than an Epistle to the two *Piso's*, is an excellent Piece of Criticism, as well as his other Epistles and Satires, yet it is supposed to be a Work not so well finished as might reasonably have been expected from the Hand of so great a Master. The *Oeconomy*, says *Vossius*, which *Horace* has observed in his *Art of Poetry*, is not very regular nor exact, all that he consider'd was, to heap together a great many Rules and

and Precepts, without regarding Method or Order. This Piece is no more than an Interpretation of *Aristotle's* Treatise of Poesy, and this Poet was the first who proposed this great Model to the *Romans*; he observed as little Method as *Aristotle* did, because, perhaps, it was writ in an Epistolary Form, whose Character ought to be free, and without Constraint.

BUT after all, says *Dryden*, the Delight which *Horace* gives me, is but languishing; he may ravish other Men, but I am too stupid and insensible to be tickled. When he barely grins himself, and, as *Scaliger* says, only shews his white Teeth, he cannot provoke to any Laughter. His Urbanity, that is, his Good Manners, are to be commended, but his Wit is faint; and his Subject, if I may dare to say so, almost insipid. His low Style is according to his Subject, that is, generally groveling. He was a Rival to *Lucilius* his Predecessor, and was resolved to surpass him in his own manner. *Lucilius*, as we see by his remaining Fragments, minded neither his Style nor his Numbers, nor his Purity of Words, nor his Run of Verse. *Horace* therefore copes with him in that humble way of Satire, writes under his own Force, and carries a dead Weight that he may match his Competitor in the Race. This I imagine was the chief Reason why he minded only the Clearness of his Satire, and the Cleanness of Expression, without ascending to those Heights, to which his own Vigour might have carried him; but limiting his Desires only to the Conquest of *Lucilius*, he had his Ends of his Rival who lived before him, but made way for a new Conquest over himself by *Juvenal* his Successor.

HORACE,

HORACE, for aught I know, might have tickled the People of his Age; but among the Moderns, if we believe *Dryden*, he is not so successful. They who say he entertains so pleasantly, may perhaps value themselves on the Quickness of their own Understandings, that they can see Jests farther off than other Men. They may find Occasion of Laughter in the *Wit Battle* of the two *Buffoons*, *Sormentus* and *Gicerrus*, and hold their Sides for fear of bursting, when *Rupilius* and *Persius* are scolding. For my own part, I can only like the Characters of all four, which are judiciously given; but for my heart I cannot so much as smile at their insipid Raillery. I see not why *Perseus* should call upon *Brutus* to revenge him on his Adversary, and that because he had killed *Julius Cæsar* for endeavouring to be a King; therefore he should be desired to murder *Rupilius* only, because his Name was *Mr. King*. A miserable Clench, in my Opinion, for *Horace* to record. Were all his Satires of this Strain, the Poet would certainly have forfeited, by writing them, all the Reputation he had gained by his Odes. But this seems to have been a Juvenile Work, and therefore the more excusable.

A. TIBULLUS.



A. TIBULLUS.

ALBIUS TIBULLUS, the Prince of the Elegiack Writers, was born at *Rome* about Six hundred and ninety Years after the Foundation of the City. That he was born upon the same Day with *Ovid* is an Error of a long standing, but is now fully discover'd and given up. He had the Name of *Albius*, some suppose, from the Beauty of his Complexion. *Horace* seems to give another Turn to it, when, whether design'd or accidental, he plays upon his Name.

Albi, nostrorum sermonum Candide Judex.

His Family was of principal Note, his Parents being of the Equestrian Order, illustrious both in Peace and War; to the Advantages of a Noble Birth, he receiv'd the additional Blessing of a plentiful Estate, and the peculiar Advantages of a beautiful and comely Personage.

He scarce began to be known to the World, before he found the Favour and Friendship of *Messala Corvinus*, one of the bravest and politest Men among the *Romans*, a Patron worthy our Poet, famous as to martial Affairs, an admirable Judge of Learning, and a curious Orator; for which he was so remarkable, that *Cicero* had

an extraordinary Value for him, even when but young. To this Great Man *Virgil* dedicated his *Chris*; *Horace* mentions him with great respect, and *Quintilian* ranks him among his Masters of Oratory.

THESE Advantages of Wealth and Beauty added to a gay Temper, led our Poet very early into a Pursuit of all those Pleasures and Extravagancies, whereto Youth are usually inclined; among which the Esteem of Women, and the Pursuits of Love were the chief. The first Mistress that engaged his Mind, was that Lady whom he addresses under the Name of *Delia*; but *Apuleius* has obliged us with her right Name, which was *Plania*: whether she was married during the time of his Amours with her or before, is doubtful; he in some Places writing to her and inviting her into the Country, as if disengaged from any Confinement; and in others railing at the strict Watch kept over her, and advising her to deceive them: Arts which she presently learn'd, and to that Perfection, as to deceive even her Instructor; and notwithstanding his Fondness for her, she had more Favourites than were consistent with the Quiet of *Tibullus*.

THE second Mistress was she who is called by the Name of *Neera*, tho' placed the third in his Works; but since *Ovid* has told us *Nemesis* is the last, it is to be supposed this Lady was between *Delia* and her. The Name is by *Fabritius* said to be generally applied to a common Woman of the Town, but I think without the least Reason, since we find it frequently applied to Persons not bearing that Character. Thus *Homer* uses it, and *Flaccus* reckons it
among

among the Names of the chief Women of *Lemnos*; to which we may add the faithful Attendant upon *Cleopatra* at her Death. Nor can it be imagin'd that she was a Woman of a loose Character, since he addresses her at a greater Distance than the rest, seems to expostulate with her upon her Unkindness in disliking him, rather than her Baseness in deceiving him, and by calling her Chaste, has removed all Cause for such Suspicion; he seems to have a Desire of marrying her, but upon being disappointed we hear no more mention of her. And *Ovid* is silent upon this account when he reckons up his other Mistresses, I suppose having a Regard to her as a Woman of Quality and Character. It is not unlikely that this is the same with that *Glycera*, whom *Horace* mentions to *Tibullus*, when he bids him not to be overtroubled at her esteeming another more than him, tho' some think it is spoken of *Nemesis*.

HIS third and last Mistress was *Nemesis*, a Person for whom he seems to express the greatest Passion, a Woman of a covetous and mercenary Temper, which he frequently complains of. *Ovid* makes mention of this Lady as much celebrated by him, as does *Martial* likewise, and gives her a Character not very commendable. As for *Sulpicia*, whom he has likewise complimented, she seems to be no otherwise a Favourite of his, than as she was esteemed by *Messala* and *Cerinius*, tho' some deny that Piece in Praise of *Sulpicia* to be writ by him, but take it to be composed by some Person in the time of *Domitian*; and that she was the same whom *Martial* likewise celebrates, Wife of *Calenus*. But tho' there is such a Person mentioned by

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by *Martial*, it is by no means to be inferred from thence, that there was no other fine Woman of that Name but she ; nor was it worth the while of any other Poet to invent all those little Pieces in the fourth Book, and fix the Names of *Messala* and *Cerintus* to them ; they rather seem to be the gay Effect of some little Incidents in their Acquaintance. She is here in one place called the Daughter of *Servius Sulpicius*, who was Consul, and killed at *Mutina*, being sent thither by the Senate against *Anthony*. Whoever she was, she is supposed to be a singular Favourite of *Messala*, and celebrated by him in his Poems ; which *Virgil* hints at in writing to *Messala*.

THUS *Tibullus* gayly trifled away the early Part of his Life, and made Use of the Advice he gives others to employ their time, and seize every Pleasure as it comes. But however he might value the Ladies, there lies a heavy Charge against him of a detestable Crime, too common at that time, as it is at this. And indeed some Part of his Writings give too much Cause of Suspicion ; but this perhaps may rather proceed from the rash Conjectures of his Readers, than from any Design or real Inclination of his. The Notions of Platonic Love were too common at that time, and it was no strange thing to write in a Style expressive of Terms too amorous for our Ears.

THE Persons he is said to esteem, were *Maratus* and *Tytius* ; the first was a *Phœnician*, and so called from a City in that Country called *Marathon*, mentioned by *Mela*, his true Name being *Cyrus*, as it was common to call Captives or Slaves by the Name of Kings and Persons of former Note.

Lib.

Lib. I. Eleg. 4.

*Alas ! how Marathus a thousand ways
Distracts my Soul, and kills me with Delays !
No Rules or Precepts serve to gain his Love,
Nor Arts avail, nor any Means can move ;
Indulge my Love, lest I in time shall grow
A common Town-talk, and a pointed Show,
Scorn'd and derided by the youthful Train,
For teaching Rules my self must own are vain.*

This is that Cyrus whom Horace speaks of as a
Suitor of Pholoë,

Albi, ne doleas, &c.

Od. 1. i. Od. 33.

*Albius desist, desist to mourn,
Too mindful of fair Glycera's Scorn :
Nor farther urge the mournful Strain,
Nor sing soft Elegies in vain :
Since she for one more young than you,
Forgets her Faith, and breaks her Vow.
Consider, fair Lycoris' Pain
For Cyrus, meets a cold Disdain ;
While Cyrus with a diff'rent View,
Does proud Pholoë's Love pursue.
But Wolves with Goats shall join ere she
Consent to one so vile as he.*

He was a Rival to Horace, and that a dangerous
one too ; for Horace represents him as a proud
haughty Person, and a rash Punisher of a jilt-
ing Mistress.

— *Nec metues protervum, &c.* Od. 1. i. Od. 17.

*Nor saucy Cyrus fear, he's far away,
He shall not see, nor seize, nor tear
Thy Chaplet from thy Hair, &c.*

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I suppose he was no great Favourite of *Horace* upon this score, and therefore to this Character he in another Place adds that of a base, inconstant Man.

TITIUS is supposed to be that *Septimius*, or *Septimius Titius*, a Lyrick Poet, who was familiar with *Horace*; he wrote likewise Tragedies and Comedies, but his Works are lost. He has, says the old Scholiast upon *Horace*, a famous Monument by the *Via Appia* at *Aricia*, a Town in *Latium*.

Quid Titius, Romana brevi, &c.

Epist. Lib. 2. Ep. 3.

*And what doth Titius, be of growing Fame,
Who doth not fear to drink of Pindar's Stream,
Who scorns known Springs and Lakes, that glorious he,
And is he well, and doth he think of me?*

BUT the Life of *Tibullus* was not intirely taken up with Ease and Indolence, for about the twenty-eighth Year of his Age the *Pannonians* began to rebel, against whom *Messala* went, and with him our Poet, in which Expedition, he says, he saw a Man at *Arupinum* above a hundred Years of Age, and even then a vigorous active Soldier. His second Expedition was with *Messala* into *Syria*, of which he grievously complains in his last Elegy of the first Book. *Messala* was sent with an extraordinary Power into *Syria*, in which Expedition *Tibullus* attended him; but touching at *Corfu*, he fell dangerously ill, and was forc'd to stay behind upon that Island; but afterwards recovering, he followed

lowed him into *Cilicia*, *Syria*, and *Egypt*. If he had died of that Illness, he desired this Epitaph might be inscribed over him:

*Hic jacet immiti consumptus morte Tibullus,
Messalam terrâ dum sequiturque mari.*

*Here lies Tibullus slain by Death's sore Hand,
Who follow'd Messala by Sea and Land.*

His last Appearance in publick Affairs was his Attendance upon *Messala*, in the Expedition to *Aquitain*, whither *Messala* went Proconsul. In this War he behaved with Dignity, and was rewarded with military Honours. After which returning to *Rome*, and being weary of a Course of Life spent partly in Folly, and partly in publick Distractions, he began to think of devoting the rest of his Days to Ease and Quiet; and tho' his Estate was much impair'd, yet having enough left to live, retired with Dignity; he withdrew to his ancient and pleasant Seat in *Pedana*, not far from *Rome*, where he apply'd himself chiefly to Philosophy, intermingling those Studies with the softer Amusements of Poetry.

Albi, nostrorum sermonum, &c. Ep. l. i. Ep. 4.

*Albius! the finest Judge of all I write,
In what Amusements do you take delight?
Do you at Pedan the soft Minutes use?
In writing what exceeds Parmensis' Muse?
Or do you walk the silent healthy Wood,
Studying what's worthy of the Wise and Good?
For thou'rt not all a Body void of Mind,
The Gods to thee a beauteous Form assign'd.*

*They gave thee Riches with a Hand profuse,
 And gave thee generous Power and Art to use.
 What fonder Wishes could a Nurse employ,
 For Heaven's Indulgence on her fav'rite Boy?
 Than for a bounteous Share of Wit and Sense,
 And Pow'r of Words and ready Eloquence,
 Favour and Fame, and a continu'd Health,
 And cleanly Diet, and sufficient Wealth?*

By the Muse of *Parmensis* he means *Cassius* of *Parma*, a celebrated Elegiac Poet, who, siding with *Brutus* and *Cassius*, was put to death, after their Defeat, by Order of *Augustus*.

THIS Course of Life had the additional Advantage of contracting an intimate Friendship with the greatest Men of that Age, as *Virgil*, whom he copies exactly in his Prodigies, and therefore without doubt had been familiar with his Works. He contracted an extraordinary Intimacy with *Horace*, the fittest Person to engage as a Friend; being, as *Sir William Temple* has observ'd, the greatest Master of Life, and of true Sense in the Conduct of it. From him *Tibullus* has receiv'd a Complement, greater perhaps than he has paid to any other Person, when he calls him a polite and curious Judge of his Works, and attributes to him a fine and true Relish of his Writings. We find in his Works the Name of *Macer*, with whom he was doubtless familiar, whom some will have to be *Pompeius Macer*, Library-Keeper to *Augustus*; but the Person here meant was the famous *Æmilius Macer*, who was likewise intimate with *Virgil*, and by him mentioned under the Name of *Mopsus*, as *Servius* has observ'd.

It has caused an Inquiry, what could be the Reason that *Tibullus* and *Propertius* make no mention of each other, they being the two famous Men at that time for the same Studies. Some have imagined it was Emulation in them; add to this, that *Propertius* is not a little full of himself, vainly ostentatious of his Learning, and boasts that he was the first successful in Elegy among the Romans. The Vanity of which, *Tibullus* who was superiour (as some conceive) both in Quality and Learning, saw with a silent Scorn, as doubtless did *Horace*, who never mentions him, tho' he was a Retainer to *Mecænas* his Patron.

HAPPY in such a Circle of Acquaintance he lived respected, without troubling himself with Business of State. He did not approve of the Conduct of Affairs at that time, he was a professed Enemy to Pomp and Grandeur, and so frequently dwells upon the Praise of the old Commonwealth and primitive Roman Simplicity, that we may reasonably suppose he was no great Friend to a Court consisting of Pride and Luxury. We do not in all his Works find him either praise the Government of *Augustus*, or the generous Ministration of *Mecænas*, tho' all his Cotemporaries have, and he could sometimes scarce avoid it; but as he had the rigid Pride not to flatter them, so he had the discreet Caution not to shew his Dislike, but rather is silent. When he has recited all the Prodigies forerunning the Death of *Cæsar*, he never mentions the Occasion of their appearing, and rather puts a Constraint upon his own Opinion, by passing over in silence, what no other but himself would. As a competent Fortune secured

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him from Flattery in order for a Support, so his avoiding publick Affairs secured him from the Strokes of Envy.

BUT eight Years were scarce spent in his happy Retirement, and he had but just time to fix his Schemes of Life and taste the Pleasures of Ease; when Death, eager for so valuable a Prize, seized him and put an end to all his Designs. This happen'd in the forty-fourth Year of his Age, the same Year in which *Virgil* died. Whilst he lay dangerously ill, his great Concern was that he could not embrace his *Delia* in his last Moments; but Fortune gratified him in this, for *Delia* and *Nemesis* paid him the last Rites, and attended his Obsequies with the utmost Tenderness and Affection. *Domitius Marsus*, a Poet of that Time, has written this Epitaph upon the Occasion:

*Te quoque Virgilio comitem non æqua Tibulle,
Mors Juvenem campos misit ad Elysios.
Ne foret aut Elegis molles qui fletet amores,
Aut caneret forti regia bella Pede.*

*And you, Tibullus, Death constrain'd to go
Too soon with Virgil to the Fields below;
Lest any Poet should with us remain,
To weep soft Loves in Elegiack Vein,
Or sing of Battles in a lofty Strain.*

THE Elegy of Ovid upon the Death of Tibullus is a fine Poem, it begins thus;

Amo. l. 3. El. 9.
*If fair Aurora wept for Memnon dead,
And Thetis Tears for her Achilles shed,*

If

If mighty Goddesses to Grief must bow,
 And be affected by inferiour Wee;
 Then weeping Elegy thy Locks unbind,
 And throw thy Tresses careless to the Wind.
 See the soft Master of thy moving Strain,
 The easy, tender, Elegiack Vein,
 See thy Tibullus' breathless Body laid,
 With Flames surrounded on the funeral Bed.
 See Venus' Son express the utmost Moan,
 Reverse'd his Quiver and his Arrows gone;
 Venus her self cannot her Sorrows hide,
 But grieves as much as when Adonis died,

ELEGY, says Rapin, by the Quality of its Name, is destin'd to Tears and Complaints, and therefore ought to be of a doleful Character; but it has been frequently used in Subjects of Tenderness and Matters of Love. The *Latins* have been more successful therein (by what appears to us) than the *Greeks*; for little remains to us of *Philetas* and *Tyrtaeus*, who were famous in *Greece* for this kind of Verse. They who have writ Elegy best among the *Latins*, are *Tibullus*, *Propertius*, and *Ovid*. *Tibullus* is elegant and polite; *Propertius* noble and high; but *Ovid* is to be preferred to both, because he is more natural, more moving and more passionate, and thereby he has better expressed the Character of Elegy than the others: But with all his Exactness, *Tibullus* falls short in his Panegyrick of *Messala*; so hard it is to praise well. *Scaliger* likewise censures this Poem, he says it is so loose and careless, and so destitute either of Vigor or Harmony, that it is natural to believe it was published before it was finished, and that the Author had not leisure to put his last Hand to it.

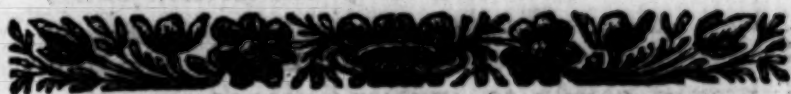
QUINTILIAN, an excellent Judge of the Roman Language, and of those who wrote in it, gives to *Tibullus* the Preference of all the Elegiac Writers. In Elegy, says he, we challenge the Greek Writers, of which the neatest and the most elegant, in my Opinion, is *Tibullus*; Some indeed prefer *Propertius* to him; *Ovid* is more lascivious than either of them, and *Gallus* more rough and unpolished.

It is certain that the Thoughts of this Poet throughout are inimitably soft and tender, humble and submissive, yet never groveling, base or mean; in his Writings, says *Lipsius*, the Latin Tongue appears according to its true and native Elegance. This Writer, says *Scaliger*, is almost every where uniform and of a piece, he is consistent with himself, and sustains his Character; he generally gives one and the same Turn to things; he is the most polite of all the Elegiac Writers; but his so often using the infinitive Moods of the præterperfect Tense of five Syllables, such as *continuisse*, *discubuisse*, *increpuisse*, *pertinuisse*, and many others, is a thing very unpleasant and disagreeable.

HE has left us four Books of *Elegies*; his Panegyrick upon *Messala* is suspected; the small Pieces at the End of the fourth Book (except the thirteenth) which *Scaliger* calls hard, languid, and rough, are so poor and trifling, that it is impossible to make any thing of them. They either do not belong to *Tibullus*, or never received his last Hand, and remain unfinished.



PROPER.



PROPERTIUS.

SEXTUS AURELIUS PROPERTIUS, an Elegiac Poet, descended from an Equestrian Family, was born at *Mevania* a Town in *Umbria*: His Father was a Man of some Interest in his Country, and taking the part of *Lucius Antonius*, was put to Death by the Command of *Augustus*, who seized upon his Estate, and reduced his Children to great Distress. He came to *Rome* very young, and giving up his Time and Studies to Poetry, to which his Genius naturally inclined him, he was soon distinguish'd, and introduced into the Favour of the chief of the *Roman* Wits, of *Mecænas*, of *Gallus*, *Ovid* and *Tibullus*. *Mecænas* attending upon *Augustus* into *Greece*, entertained *Propertius* in his Company. He had a House upon the *Esquiline* Mount. He expressed the greatest Tenderness for *Hostia* his Mistress, whom he celebrated under the Name of *Delia*. *Martial* observes, that the Poet and the Mistress were equally obliged to each other; He for being inspired to write by her Charms and Beauties, and She for being immortal by his Elegies.

*Cynthia facundi Carmen juvenile Properti
Accepit samam, nec minus ipsa dedit.*

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He is supposed to have been eight Years older than *Ovid*, and to have died about the fortieth of his Age, which is all to be met with concerning him.

He has left us four Books of Elegies; and proposed chiefly to imitate *Callimachus* in that kind of Writing. A particular Account of him is to be found among the Greek Poets. He had two other Favourites, whom he admired and aimed to follow, *Mimnermus* and *Philetas*; a short Character of these Poets, will serve to illustrate and explain the Abilities of *Propertius*. *Mimnermus* was much older than *Callimachus*, was born at *Colophon*, and lived in the time of *Solon*. There are but few Fragments of him remaining, yet sufficient to shew him an accomplished Master of Elegy, in which, tho' *Quintilian* has given *Callimachus* the Crown, yet *Horace* makes *Mimnermus* the Superior.

Discedo Alcæus, &c.

*Then straight in his Opinion I'm Divine,
Alcæus; well, and what is he in mine?
Callimachus, or would he more? Mimnermus' Fame
He gets, and glories in a borrow'd Name.*

Propertius in Love-Matters and in the Description of the softer Pleasures, ventures to prefer him to *Homer*, as the more easy, and the more moving of the two:

*Plus in amore valet Mimnermi versus Homero,
Carmina mansuetus lænia quærit amor.*

*Greater in Love Mimnerm than Homer reigns,
For gentle Love demands as gentle Strains.*

His

His Temper seems to have been as truly Poetical as his Writings, entirely bent on Pleasures and on Love, and an Enemy to the lightest Cares of common Business. *Horace* has quoted his Opinion about the Insignificancy of all human Enjoyments, if not temper'd with pleasant Humours and easy Passions.

*Si Mimnermus uti censet sine amore jociſque,
Nil eſt jucundum, vivas in amore jociſque.*

If nothing, as *Mimnermus* ſtrives to prove,
Can e'er be pleaſant without wanton Love.

This Poet was a Piper as well as a Writer of Elegies; and *Nanno*, the Lady that paſſes for his Miſtreſs, is recorded to have got her Livelihood by the ſame Profeſſion. *Hermesianax* in *Atteneus* makes him the Father of Elegy, and the Inventor of the Pentameter Verſe.

Mimnermus: de roſarum, &c.

*Mimnermus firſt to charm his racking Care,
Fram'd the ſoft Spirit of Pentameter.*

Philetas was of the Iſland of *Coos*, and flouriſhed in the time of *Alexander* the Great; *Propertius* pays him a high Compliment, he ſays that the Muſe *Calliope*, in order to qualify him to write upon the Delicacies of Love, inſpired him with the Spirit of *Philetas*, which he calls dipping him in the *Philetean* Stream.

*Lympbiſque a fonte petitis,
Ora Philetea noſtra rigavit aqua.*

The three Maſters of Elegy were *Propertius*, *Tibullus*, and *Ovid*; *Tibullus* has a flowing Sweetneſs

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Sweetness in his Hexameters, which exceeds that of all the Elegiac Writers; *Ovid* was too negligent in his Versification, and *Propertius* too stiff and harsh in his, especially in making his Pentameters generally end with a Word of many Syllables; 'tis so in his very first Distich:

*Cynthia prima suis miserum me cepit ocellis,
Contactum nullis ante Cupidinibus.*

Ah me! 'Twas *Cynthia* first engag'd my Eyes,
Smitten before with no Cupidities.

In the Pentameters likewise *Tibullus* had the greater Excellence; *Propertius* has too much affected the Cadence of the Greek Pentameters, which does not so well agree with the Genius of the *Latin* Tongue; and *Ovid* is not alike easy and soft in his. Tho' *Tibullus* in his Verse flows more smoothly, yet *Propertius* in Art and Labour exceeded them all; he first shewed the Way, those who followed had the Use of his Example, and he may be justly ranked among the Greek Poets he proposed for his Imitation.

THE Criticks pronounce with Candour upon the Writings of *Propertius*; *Maresius* prefers him to all who have written Elegy among the *Latins*; for, says he, though *Tibullus* be wonderfully pleasant and elegant, and much more correct in the *Latin* Tongue than he, (who often imitates the Greek Poets) and is also more curious and exact in his Verse, yet *Propertius* seems to surpass him in Learning, and also in Sweetness of Temper, so very obliging and good-natured is he; but though *Propertius* was of such a sweet calm Temper, yet he sometimes expresses his Passion with as much Heat and Vehemency as the

the hottest Lover of them all. *Barthius* calls him a most ingenious, a most accurate, and a most learned Writer, and incomparably well skilled in the *Greek* Elegancies. He who loves not *Propertius*, can never be a Favourite of the Muses; so great a Sweetness is there in his Verses, that as the Comical Poet observes, *Nit nisi mulsæ loquitur*; Every Word in them seems mixt with Honey. So full of Learning are they, that we are apt to think they were dictated by *Apollo* himself. Only, says *Turnebus*, I could wish he had employ'd his most curious fine Fancy upon some other Subject than that of Love, that so he might be read by Youth with greater Safety, than now he can. *Lipsius* allows that there is a deal of abstruse Learning in *Propertius*, and that besides the Elegancy and Acuteness of his Sentences, there are many Things, even in his very Words, which deserve both our Notice and our Praise. One thing indeed is very new, and I cannot tell, says he, whether the like can be found in any other Author; and that is, his peculiar way of using the Simple Verbs instead of the Compounds, and out of a strange Opinion of the Elegancy giving the Simple Verbs the very same Signification that the Compounds ought to have, which he often does. To make the thing plainer, I will give you an Example or two: Thus you shall find in this Poet the Verb *secari* used for *insecari*, *testari* for *detestari*, contrary to all other Authors. Many other Instances of the like nature may be found in this Writer, which, whoever is ignorant of, may be involved in great Difficulties in the reading of this *Latin* Poet.

P H Æ D R U S.



P H Æ D R U S.

A Latin Poet, by Birth a *Thracian*; *Linus* and *Orpheus* were of the same Country, for which reason he resolved to celebrate the Honour of it,

Cur somno inerti, &c.

Præf. l. 3.

He says his Mother was deliver'd of him on the *Pierian-Hill*, made immortal by the Poets, for being the Birth-place of the *Muses*.

Ego quem Picrio, &c.

Præf. l. 3.

His Parentage is uncertain; and so is the time of his Birth. He is supposed to have been taken captive by *Octavius* the Father of *Augustus* in the *Thracian Wars*, who made a Present of him to his Son. The Emperor finding in his young Slave a Disposition for Learning attended with great Industry, gave him all the Advantages of a liberal Education, and at length made him free. He retained a grateful Remembrance of his Patron's Favour, made honourable mention of him upon all Occasions, and after his Death paid a venerable Respect to his Memory. *Tiberius* succeeding in the Empire, *Phædrus* unhappily fell under the unjust Displeasure of *Sejanus* the Prime

Prime Minister, and after the Exile of *Æsop*, composed some Fables, which had a particular regard to his own Misfortunes:

Ego porro illius, &c.

Præf. l. 3.

AUGUSTUS was very liberal in his Bounty to *Phædrus*, but he neglected the opportunity he had of growing rich, observing the danger that in those distracted times attended upon Persons of large Fortunes. He was tinctured with the common Vanity of Authors; he was certain he should acquire Immortality by his Writings, and eternize his Patron *Particulo* to all Posterity:

Particulo, chartis, &c.

Fab. 5. l. 3.

He thinks it an Honour to him, that a Person of *Particulo*'s nice Judgment should approve his Fables.

Mihi parva laus est, &c.

He had another Patron, whom he calls *Eutychus*, to him he has inscrib'd his third Book. He lived to a great Age, and is supposed to have been about seventy at the time of his Death.

So short is the Account that remains of this Writer, of whom so little Notice is taken by the Ancients. He turned the Fables of *Æsop* into *Iambic Verse*, as he says himself in the Preface of his Work, which contains five Books:

Æsopus auctor, &c.

Francis Pithæus was the first that recover'd the Fables of *Phædrus*, and *Peter* his Brother gave them

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them the first Edition ; afterwards, in the Year sixteen hundred, they were published by *Nicholas Rigaltius*, and dedicated to the great *Thuanus*. His Fables are generally a Work valued by the Learned for the Purity of the Language, which is very like that of *Terence*, and they who imagine they discover something barbarous in his Style, rather suppose there must be something of this in it because he was a *Thracian*, than that they could ever really find it so.



MARCUS.



MARCUS MANILIUS.

THIS old *Latin* Poet is little known, tho' as worthy of our Acquaintance, as many of those who are in great Credit : He lay buried in the *German* Libraries, not heard of in the World till *Poggius* published him near two Centuries ago. There is a dead Silence concerning him among the Learned of Antiquity, as if he had never been, nor can his greatest Admirers find any Character of him in old Writers.

YET it must be owned, that he is an Author of some considerable Age ; the severest Criticks allow him to be as old as *Theodosius* the Great, and pretend to find some particular Phrases in him, which are certain Characters of him of that time.

OTHERS, who believe they have very good Reasons to place him higher, find it very difficult to account for this universal Silence : He is not, they say, mentioned by *Ovid* in his Catalogue of Poets, and no wonder, since he did not begin to write before the Banishment of *Ovid*, and published nothing before his Death : His Fame did not reach so far as *Pontus*, otherwise they are confident there are too many
Graces.

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Graces in his Poem to be neglected, at least the Singularity of his Subject would have deserved to be taken notice of. But why *Quintilian* doth not propose him to his Orator, tho' he encourages him to read *Macer* and *Lucretius*, and affirms that a competent Skill in Astronomy is necessary to make him perfect in his Profession? Why the following Philologers never use his Authority, tho' it might very often have been pertinently cited by *Agellius* and *Macrobius*? Why the Grammarians and Mythologists seem to be unacquainted with his Writings? They confess these are Questions not easy to be answer'd.

OF this Poet, who is universally acknowledged to have lain very long unknown, and about whom, since he first appeared in the World, so many Controversies have risen, I am to give some Account. His Name is commonly said to be *Marcus Manilius*, which in some Copies of his Poem is shortned into *Manlius*; in others softned into *Mallius*. This Variation is inconsiderable, and the common Fault of unaccurate Transcribers. He is sometimes called *Caius*, but it is a matter of no great consequence whether his Name was *Caius* or *Marcus*, it is no fit Subject for Dispute, because impossible to be determined.

THIS *M.* or *C. Manilius* was born a Roman, and lived in *Rome* when *Rome* was in her Glory, commanding the largest part of the known World, and full of the greatest Men that ever any time produced. This may be easily collected from various Instances through the Course of the Poem. The same Age that saw *Manilius* enjoyed *Varro*, *Lucretius*, *Cicero*, *Cæsar*, *Virgil*, *Varius*,
Horace,

Horace, and (to close the Catalogue) *Augustus*. In the beginning of this Astronomical Poem that Emperor is invoked; that very Emperor, who was the adopted Son of *Julius Caesar*, who beat *Brutus* and *Cassius* at *Philippi*; overthrew *Pompey* the Great's Son; who sent *Tiberius* to *Rhades*; who lost three Legions in *Germany*, under the Command of *Varus*; who routed *Anthony* and *Cleopatra* at *Actium*; and saved the Roman Empire, by turning that overgrown dissolute Republick into a well-regulated Monarchy. Here are so many Characters, that the Person cannot be mistaken, not one of them agreeing to any but the first Great *Augustus*. So that this Author lived in that Age to which he pretends by so many very particular Circumstances, or else he is a most notorious Cheat, and one of the greatest Impostors in the World. It is almost needless to mention the Exceptions of those Criticks who think his Style impure, or, as they please to speak, too barbarous for the Age he pretends to: Indeed *Gyraldus* endeavours by this very Argument, to prove he was no Roman born; but *Scaliger* laughs at him for his Attempt, and tells him, that he does not distinguish between Idiotisms and Barbarisms; And the learned *Vossius*, after he had studied this Poet, and consider'd him well, found nothing inconsistent in him with the Age of *Augustus*, and the Politeness of his Court; and truly most of the Instances that are produced upon this Head, do not fasten upon the Author himself, but on the Transcribers and Publishers of his Writings.

THIS Writer not only lived in the *Augustan* Age, but was born under the Reign of that Emperor, not only a Roman, but of illustrious Extraction, being

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being a Branch of that Noble Family the *Manilii*, who so often filled the Consul's Chair, and supplied the best and greatest Offices in the *Roman Commonwealth*. Indeed some have affirmed, that he was of servile Condition, and being made free, according to Custom, took the Name of his Patron; but how should he be a Slave, when he expressly declares himself to be a *Roman* born? for in his fourth Book he shews a Concern for the Interest of the *Roman Commonwealth* down as low as the Age of *Hannibal*,

Speratum Annibalem nostris cecidisse catenis,

Hannibal then destined to our Chains;

Which he could not with any Propriety have done, had his relation to that State commenced so lately, or had his Ancestors had no Interest in the then Losses or Victories of *Rome*. And seeing he was born a *Roman*, and of the Family of the *Manilii*; we may further from some other Evidences conclude, that he sprung from a very considerable, if not one of the noblest Branches of it: for if we reflect that tho' he died young, yet he had been well instructed in the several Hypotheses of the ancient Philosophers, accurately taught the Doctrine of the Stoicks, led through all the intricate Mazes and Subtilties of Astrology; that he was acquainted with Mathematicks, knew all the Mythology of the Ancients, and had run through the *Greek Poets*; we shall find in him all the Signs of a very liberal and costly Education, and consequently of a considerable Quality, or at least a great Fortune. But if we reflect farther, that he was
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conversant at Court, and acquainted with the modish and nicest Flattery of the Palace, that he made his Compliments in the same Phrase that the most intimate and finish'd Courtier ever used, we may raise another probable Argument, that his Quality was great. Now this Reflection may be supported by one Observation made on the Compliment he pays *Tiberius* when at *Rhodes*. He styles him *Magni Mundi Lumen*, using the very same Word which we find in *Velleius Paterculus*, who wrote all Court Language upon the very same occasion. *Alterum Reipublicæ Lumen* *Tiberius*, and retired to *Rhodes*, *ne Fulgor suus orientium Juvenum C. & L. Cæs. obstaret initiis*, says that Historian.

As to his Place of Birth, since we find him at *Rome* when he wrote this Poem, and no Author settles him any where else, it may with some shew of Probability be concluded that he was born in that City, in which we are certain he both studied and led his Life. But if we consider farther, that he takes all Occasions to shew his Respect for *Rome*, that with Zeal he mentions those extravagant Honours which the Flattery of *Asia*, and the Vanity of her own Citizens had put upon her, we shall find so much Veneration in his Writings, that it could not well rise from any other Spring than that Piety which Men of generous Sense and Spirit always retain for the Places of their Birth.

THE Poem of *Manilius*, which is at length come to light, contains a System of the Ancient Astronomy and Astrology, together with the Philosophy of the Stoicks. This Piece consists of five Books, he began it when he was young, and did not live to finish his Design, or accurately

curately revise what he had written. He wrote a sixth Book, but that has not been recover'd. That he was young when he compos'd this Work, may be demonstrat'd almost from every Page of it; he is too fierce and fiery for an advanced Age, and bounds every Step he takes. When he is obliged to give Rules, and is tied almost to a certain Form of Words, he struggles against those necessary Fetters, he reaches after the strongest Metaphors, uses the boldest Catachresis, and against all the Rules of Decency labours after an *Obscure Sublime*, when he should endeavour to be plain, intelligible and easy; but as soon as he hath room to get loose, how wildly doth he rove? He is not free but licentious, and strives to err greatly. 'Tis needless to produce Particulars, since they are so visible in the Prefaces, Fables and Descriptions through his Books; and upon the whole, it may be affirmed, there are so many Boldnesses scattered through his Poem, that a Man may read his Youth in his Writings, as well as his Contemporaries could do it in his Face. On the contrary, when we find a Warmth in a Man of Years, we feel it to be regular, he never starts, his Pace is equal, and seldom varies, but when his Subject forces him to a more than ordinary Quickness.

By observing that *Manilius* began this Poem when he was young, by his dying young, and leaving his Work uncorrect without his last hand, we may be able to give a tolerable Account of some seeming Difficulties that relate to this Author; for if it should be asked why the first Book is more correct than the rest? Why the Impurities of Style the Criticks charge upon him

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are for the most part pickt out of the four last Books? I would answer, we have only the first and rude Draughts of them, and that as Poets and Painters are said to be very near ally'd, so they agree in nothing more than they do in this, that tho' in their *Sketches* we see the Master, yet we may find something that the *Finisher* would correct. To him, who asks why there is no mention of this Poet in any of the Ancients, I would reply, that *Manilius* having left an unfinish'd Piece, his Family was studious, both of his Credit and their own; they carefully preserv'd the Orphan, but would not expose it. In that Age, when Poetry was rais'd to its greatest Height, it had argued the utmost Fondness, or the extremest Folly in a noble Family, to have publish'd a crude unfinish'd Poem, and thereby engage their Honours to defend it.

THIS *Manilius*, without doubt, had a liberal Education suitable to his Quality, and the time in which he lived; but his Poem particularly shews him to be well acquainted with the Principles of the several Sects of Philosophers, but addicted to the Stoicks, whose Hypothesis in all its Out-Lines, bears a very near resemblance to some of the Theories that are now in fashion. The modern Philosophers build Worlds according to the Models of the ancient Heathens, and *Zeno* is the chief Architect.

THE Stoicks Principles were in short these. They say, there is One Infinite Eternal Almighty Mind, which being diffus'd thro' the whole Universe of well order'd and regularly dispos'd Matter, actuates every Part of it, and is as it were the Soul of this vast Body. The Parts of this Body, they say, are of two sorts;
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the Celestial, *viz.* the Planets and the fixt Stars, and the Terrestrial, *viz.* the Earth, and all the other Elements about it. The Celestial continue still the same without any Change or Variation, but the whole sublunary World is not only liable to Dissolution, but often hath been, and shall be again dissolv'd by Fire. From this Chaos, which because it is made by Fire, they call Fire, they say another System would arise, the several Particles of it settling according to their respective Weights. Thus the Earth would sink lowest, the Water would be above that, the Air next, and the Fire encompass the other three. But because all the earthy Parts are not equally rigid, nor equally dispersed thro' the Chaos; therefore there would be Cavities and Hollows in some Places, fit to receive the Water, and to be Channels for Rivers. In other Places, Hills and Mountains would rise, and the whole System appear in that very form and figure which it now bears. They farther add, that this infinite Mind hath made one general Decree concerning the Government of the lower World, and executes it by giving such and such Powers to the Celestial Bodies, as are sufficient and proper to produce the design'd Effects. This Decree thus executed they call Fate, and upon this Principle their whole System of Astrology depends. That some Things happen'd in the World which were very unaccountable, every Day's Experience taught them; they learn'd also, or pretended to have learn'd from very many accurate and often repeated Observations, that there was a constant Agreement between those odd unaccountable Accidents, and such and such Positions of the heavenly

ly Bodies, and therefore concluded that those Bodies were concern'd in those Effects. Hence they began to settle Rules, and to draw their scatter'd Observations into an Art. And this was the State of the Hypothesis and Astrology of the Stoicks; (I must call it so for Distinction sake, tho' neither the Hypothesis nor the Astrology built upon it was invented by *Zeno*, but deliver'd down to him and his Scholars, by the *Ghaldeans*, and other Philosophers of the East;) till the *Greeks*, ambitious of making it appear their own, endeavour'd to establish, support, and adorn it with their Fables, and by that means made that which before seem'd only precarious (as all Arts which are drawn from bare Observation, and not from any settled Principles in Nature must appear to be) ridiculous Fancies and wild Imaginations. But I do not design an Account, nor a Defence of the Astrology of the Ancients, it has been spoken against, and derided on the one hand, and supported and applauded on the other by Men of great Wit, Judgment, Piety and Worth; and he, who shall take a view of it, will always find enough in it to divert his Leisure, if not to satisfy his Curiosity, and to raise his Admiration.

THIS is the Hypothesis which *Manilius* endeavour'd to explain in *Latin Verse*: Had he lived to revise it, we had now had a more beautiful and correct Piece; he had a Genius equal to his Undertaking, his Fancy was bold and daring, his Skill in the Mathematicks great enough for his Design, his Knowledge of the History and Acquaintance with the Mythology of the Ancients general. As he is now, some of the Criticks place him amongst the Judicious

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and Elegant, and all allow him to be one of the useful, instructive, profitable Poets; he hints at some Opinions, which later Ages have thought fit to glory in, as their own Discoveries. Thus he defends the Fluidity of the Heavens, against the Hypothesis of *Aristotle*.

He asserts that the fixed Stars are not all in the same concave Superficies of the Heavens, and equally distant from the Center of the World. He maintains that they are all of the same Nature and Substance with the Sun, and that each of them hath a particular *Vortex* of its own; and lastly, he affirms that the *Milky Way* is only the undistinguish'd Lustre of a great many small Stars, which the Moderns now see to be such thro' the Glass of *Galileo*. In short, we do not give him too great a Character, when we say, he is one of the most discerning Philosophers that Antiquity can shew.



IOVID.



OVID.

PUBLIUS OVIDIUS NASO, a Roman Knight, and one of the celebrated Poets of the *Augustan* Age, was born at *Suhno*, a Town in the Country of the *Peligni*, about ninety Miles from *Rome*: His Birth fell out about the middle of *March*, in the remarkable Year, when the Consuls *Hirtius* and *Pansa* were slain in the Battle of *Mutina* against *Antony*. This Battle was fought about forty three Years before the *Christian* Æra, in the Year of *Rome* seven hundred and ten. He was descended from an ancient Family of great Honour, and of the Equestrian Order; and being born to a handsome Fortune, he had the Advantage of a good Education, by which he was accomplished, and became one of the best-bred Gentlemen of the Age.

NATURE inspired him with so strong a Disposition to Poetry, that out of love to the *Muses* he renounced all that Application which is necessary to those who would arrive at Dignities. His Father designed him for the Bar, and prevailed with him to quit his poetical Studies, as a hungry and starving Profession: He applied himself for some time to the Study of Eloquence; his Masters in Oratory were *Arellius Fuscus* and *Porcius Latro*, under whose Instructions he became a good Advocate; he says of himself, that he pleaded in Causes at the Tribunal of the *Cen-*
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tumviri,

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tumviri, and that being chosen Arbitrator in in some Law-Suits, he decided them like a Man of Honour.

Nec male commissa est, &c. Trist. lib. 2. v. 93.

*Before the Decemvirs I have appear'd,
And for the Guilty with Success been heard:
In private Matters I've explain'd the Laws,
Nor could he blame his Judge, who lost his Cause.*

BUT his Inclination to versifying soon return'd, and coming into an ample Fortune upon the Death of his elder Brother, he gave up all publick Affairs, and devoted himself wholly to the Delights of Poetry. His fine Parts were soon distinguish'd by the *Roman Wits*, and introduced him into the Company of *Tibullus*, *Severus*, *Sabinus*, *Græcinus Flaccus*, all Men of Quality, and of the first Note in Learning. He soon discover'd a Genius to all kinds of Poetry, in each of which he might have excelled, had he used more Application in his Youth, and the latter part of his Life been less unfortunate. The natural Indolence of his Temper, joined to the Affluence of his Fortune, and his Wit and Good-humour in Conversation, engaged him too much in Company with those of his own and the Fair Sex, to leave him time enough to be so correct and exact in his Compositions, as it is to be wished he had been.

SOON after he had put on the *Toga Virilis*, which was done at seventeen Years of Age, *Augustus* honoured him with the *Latus Clavus*, an Ornament only worn by Persons of Quality. He had three Wives, two of whom he divorced soon after Marriage. His last Wife *Perilla*, he tenderly

tenderly loved; she had a Taste for Poetry, and not only proved the best of Wives while they continued together, but after his Banishment, notwithstanding some ungenerous Sollicitations to the contrary, she remained inviolably faithful to him.

HE was very amorous in his Youth, and indulging the fashionable Vice of the Age, had several Mistresses, one of whom he much celebrated under the Name of *Corinna*. He was excessively addicted to venereal Pleasure, and that was almost his only Vice. He informs us himself of the Qualifications with which Nature had endowed him for that Exercise, and the Use he had made of them:

Exigere a nobis angustâ nocte Corinnam

Me memini numeros sustinuisse novem.

HE found himself fresh and gay in the Morning, after passing a whole Night in amorous Embraces, and wished to die in the actual Fruition of that Pleasure. Nothing seemed to him more suitable to the Life he had led, than to make his Exit in the like Exercise. I do not believe, *Lais* the Courtezan, who died in the manner *Ovid* calls so happy, desired to expire in that way. This Poet's Writings upon Love, are the obscenest Pieces we have remaining of Antiquity; not that we find in them the gross Expressions of *Catullus*, *Horace* and *Martial*, or the Scandals of the Sin against Nature, of which these three Poets speak so freely; but the Delicacy, the Choice of Terms which *Ovid* has excelled in, render his Works the more dangerous, in regard they by this means repre-

sent in a very intelligible and elegant Manner, all the most lascivious Tricks and Impurities of Love. He does not speak upon the Credit of others, but from his own Practice. In his Apology indeed, which he composed in the place of his Exile, he protests he had not committed the Actions he described, and that his Head had a greater Share in those Descriptions than his Heart. It is certain that many Poets relate as fortunate Adventures what are only Fictions of their Brain, but we are at a loss to determine whether this was *Ovid's* Case; we are at too great a Distance from the Age in which he lived, and we cannot question but many Writers, when they find their own Poems brought in as Evidence against them, will boast of their Innocence, though they are guilty.

NOTWITHSTANDING his Gallantry, he found time to finish his *Heroic* Epistles, and his *Fasti*. Several little Poems are extant under his Name, which by the best Criticks are pronounced spurious. He composed a Tragedy called *Medea*, much commended by *Quintilian* for the Beauty of the Expression, and the Dignity of its Sentiments, and generally admired by the Ancients for an excellent Piece. His Muse always brought forth without Pain, and never troubled her self any farther about nursing the Child, for she took very little care in correcting her Productions. He confesses his Negligence and Idleness upon this head. He agreed that he was justly censured at *Rome*, for eternally repeating the same Things in the Poems he wrote during his Exile. This was a Fault he was very sensible of, and endeavoured to mend, but the Vivacity which animated him in his first Composition,

fition, failing him when he came to revise what he had written, he found the Correction tedious and troublesome, and gave it quite over.

THE last Poem he writ before his Banishment, was the *Metamorphosis*, but the Misfortunes he fell into, prevented his putting his last Hand to it; for the three first Books are scarce correctly finished. By this Piece he foretold Immortality to himself, and that the Work would be proof against the Injuries of Sword, Fire, Thunder and Time. It concludes thus;

Jamque Opus exegi, &c.

*The Work is finish'd, which nor dreads the Rage
Of Tempests, Fire or War, or wasting Age:
Come soon or late Death's undetermin'd Day,
This mortal Being only can decay;
My nobler Part, my Fame shall reach the Skies,
And to late Times with blooming Honours rise;
Whate'er the unbounded Roman Power obeys,
All Times and Nations shall record my Praise;
If 'tis allowed to Poets, to divine
One half of round Eternity is mine.*

WHEN he found himself condemned to Banishment, he threw his *Metamorphoses* into the Fire, either out of spite, or because he had not put his finishing Hand to them. He himself informs us of this particular. Some Copies which had before been taken of this beautiful Work, were the Cause of its not being lost.

By some Indiscretion in his Conduct, or by an accidental Discovery of some Passages at Court, which were not fit to be known, he fell into a fatal Disgrace, and incurred the Displeasure of *Augustus*, when he was about fifty Years

of Age, who banished him to *Tomi*, an *European* City, upon the *Euxine* Sea, near the Mouths of the *Danube*, in the neighbourhood too of a savage and barbarous People, who were continually making Irruptions, where he was exposed to the extreme Rigors of Frost and Cold, which was insufferable to an *Italian* of a delicate and soft Constitution, who had led his whole Life in the Pleasures of Effeminacy and Repose. Indeed *Cæsar* was pleased to leave this distressed Poet the Enjoyment of his Fortune, and did not procure his Condemnation by a Decree of the Senate, and made use of the Term *Relegation* instead of Banishment; yet it is certain, he inflicted upon him a very severe Punishment, he sent him among a sort of Savages, and there left him amidst Complaints and Groans, under the deepest Despair of ever being delivered from them.

It has been a Matter of Enquiry for many Ages, what could be the Cause of the Emperor's Resentment to punish a Poet who had so often contributed to his Pleasures, in so exemplary a manner. *Ovid* confesses in many places of his Works, that the two Causes of his Misery were, that he had composed some Books on *the Art of Love*, and that he had *seen* something. He does not tell us what it was that he saw, but gives us to understand, that his Books contributed less to his Disgrace than that did; for he supposes that, complaining to the God of Love, that after labouring to enlarge his Empire, he had obtained no other Reward than that of being banished among Barbarians, *Love* made answer to him, you know very well that was not the Thing that did you most harm.

Utque

*Utque hæc, sic utinam defendere cætera posses,
Scis aliud quod te læserit esse magis.*

HE repeats in several Places the same Complaint of having seen without design the Crime of another, and declares that it is not lawful for him to reveal this Mystery. Attempts have been made to conjecture what it was, and the more silent he is, the greater has been the Curiosity, to penetrate into this Secret.

SOME would believe, that the Poet surprised *Augustus* in a flagrant Crime with *Julia* his Daughter, and confirm this by a Passage of *Suetonius*, from which they pretend to gather, that *Caligula* despised his Mother, because he believed her to be the Offspring of the incestuous Commerce of *Augustus* with *Julia*. The Abbot *de Marolles*, in his Life of *Ovid*, tells us, that he was banished for having read to *Julia* the last Verses of his Book *de Arte Amandi*, and for having surprised *Augustus* using that young Princess with too much familiarity. The latter could not be the reason, for *Ovid* was disgraced several Years after *Julia* was gone from *Rome*, and become the Object of her Father's Indignation. I take it to be a truer Cause, says *Cicofanius* in his Life of this Poet, of banishing him, or rather of relegating him, that he had accidentally discover'd *Augustus* in some indecent and obscene Action; for *Aristotle* observes in his second Book of Rhetoric, that no hatred is so great as that which arises from being surprised in an indecent Fact: but that the Action was that of Incest, is necessarily false.

OBSERVE farther, that *Julia* was already banished, when *Ovid* composed his *Art of Love*, and that it was eight or nine Years after his writing that Book, before he himself was banished; so that one Cause of his Disgrace could not be his *Art of Love*, which had given Offence to the Emperor by some Passages of it, which were meant of his Daughter under the Name of *Corinna*. He composed that Work at the Age of Forty-one, and he was in the fifty first Year of his Age, when he left *Rome* to go to *Tomi*, the place of his Relegation. This Affair must ever remain a Secret, and needs no farther Inquiry in this place.

THOUGH *Ovid* was so unfortunate as not to procure himself to be recalled, or so much as removed to another place of Confinement, yet he never was wanting in Respect to the Emperor, but on the contrary, continued inviolably to praise him with such Extravagance as border'd upon Idolatry, and he made an Idol literally of him as soon as he heard of his Death. He not only wrote his Elegy in a Poem in the *Getic* Tongue, but also invoked him, and consecrated a Chapel to him, where he went every Morning to offer him Incense and Adoration. The Successor and Family of this Prince had their Share in all this Worship, and were in all probability the real Motive of it. However, the unhappy Poet could find no Remedy for his Misfortune, the Court continued as inexorable under *Tiberius* as before, and he died in his Exile, in the fourth Year of this Emperor, in the Year of *Rome* seven hundred seventy one, about sixty Years of Age.

HE desired that if he died in the Country of the *Getae*, his Ashes might be carried to *Rome*, and that the Epitaph he composed for himself, might be inscribed upon his Tomb.

*Hic ego qui jaceo tenerorum lusor Amorum :
Ingenio perii Naso Poeta meo.
At tibi qui transis, ne sit grave, quisquis amasti
Dicere, Nasonis molliter ossa cubant.*

*Here lies Love's faithful Slave beneath this Stone,
Ovid the Poet, by his Wit undone.
Let every Lover as he passes by,
Wish that his Bones may unmolested lie.*

He not only met with Humanity among those Barbarians, but also a great deal of Civility. They loved and honour'd him in a singular manner, and testify'd their Esteem for him by publick Decrees ; they made a general Mourning for him, and buried him in a stately Monument before the Gates of the City. He boasts of one thing which will prove that he renounced Gallantry in his Exile ; for he pretends that no Person, of whatsoever Age or Sex, could complain of him ; it is a sign he no longer amused himself in making Love, and that even after he had learn'd the *Getic* Tongue, he did not entertain the Wives and Daughters of the *Tomians* upon that Subject, for if he had, their Husbands and Fathers would have clamour'd against him. This Part of his Conduct was so much the more commendable, as it was difficult to be observed by a Person of his amorous Disposition, and who had contracted a long Habit in a quite different Course of Life.

HE wrote an infinite Number of Verses during his Exile, nor is this to be wonder'd at, for the Muses are naturally Tatlers, but most of all so in Adversity; and besides this, he wanted Conversation, and took no delight either in Drinking or Gaming, so that they must needs be his whole Entertainment. If he had met with any Persons to whom he could have repeated his Verses, he would have versified with much more Satisfaction; for he confesses that walking in the dark, and writing Verses which we can read to no body, is the very same thing. Mr. Cowley very justly remarks, that one may see through the Style of *Ovid de Tristibus*, the humble and dejected Condition of Spirit with which he wrote. There scarce remain any Footsteps of that Genius, *quem nec Jovis ira nec Ignis, &c.* The Cold of the Country had stricken through all his Faculties, and benumb'd the very Feet of his Verses; he is himself, methinks, like one of the Stories of his own *Metamorphosis*, and though there remain some weak Resemblances of *Ovid at Rome*, it is but, as he says of *Niohe*, *In vultu Color est sine sanguine, &c.*

HE had, among other good Qualities, that of not being Satirical, and yet he was very capable of composing satirical Verses, as he has shewn in his Poem against *Ibis*; for no Piece ever discover'd more Gall than this, nor more severe Maledictions. He wrote it a little after his Banishment. *Ovid* was of a pale Complexion, his Person of a middle Stature, and slender, but graceful, and his Body strong and nervous, tho' not large limb'd. According to *Apuleius*, he died upon the same Day with *Livy* the Historian.

THE

THE Works of *Ovid* are well known ; his Poetical Abilities advanc'd him with great Justice in the highest Rank among the *Roman* Poets. It is observed, that he was the best bred Gentleman of all the celebrated Genius's of the Age in which he lived, and perhaps the Copiousness of his Expressions was owing in some measure to the Civility of his Breeding, as well as to the Luxuriance of his Fancy ; and though *Virgil* and *Horace* were Courtiers too, yet they fell short of him in Courtliness of Expression, however they exceeded him in Majesty of Thought, in Closeness and Exactness of Style. The Reason was, *Ovid* was a Gentleman, and the others not ; his good Breeding was natural to him from his Infancy, theirs was acquired in their riper Years, and would never sit so handsomely upon them.

No Man, says *Scaliger*, ever did or can imitate that Easiness of Style which was in *Ovid* ; he transcends all Authors, says *Heinsius*, either in making things that are false seem probable, or things that are obscure, perspicuous, and in curiously adorning both the one and the other ; or else in relating things plainly and nakedly as they are : He abounds every where with moral Instructions, even when he is frolicksome and wanton. No one knew better how to express himself, nor to level his Thoughts to the meanest Capacity with more Advantage. He was, says *Cicero*, so exquisitely skilled in the *Latin* Tongue, that, according to the Opinion of all learned Men, if the *Roman* Language were utterly lost, and nothing left but the Works of *Ovid*, they alone would be sufficient to retrieve it. Yet this Poet, with all his Sweetness, has

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but little Variety of Numbers and Sound; he is always as it were upon the Hand-gallop, and his Verse runs upon Carpet Ground. He avoids all *Synalæphas*, so that minding only Smoothness, he wants both Majesty and Variety. *Ovid* is certainly more palatable to the Reader than any of the *Roman* Wits, though some of them are more lofty, some more instructive, and others more correct. He had Learning enough to make him equal to the best. But as his Verse came easily, he wanted the Toil of Application to amend it. He is often luxuriant both in his Fancy and Expressions, and not always natural. If Wit be Pleasantry, he has it to Excess; but if it be Propriety, *Lucretius*, *Horace*, and above all *Virgil*, are his Superiours.

THE most celebrated of the Elegiack Writers were *Tibullus*, *Propertius*, and *Ovid*. *Tibullus* is elegant and polite; *Propertius* noble and high; but *Ovid* is to be prefer'd to both, because he is more natural, more moving, and more passionate. I know not, says *Faber*, whether *Ovid* did any where shew more Wit and Learning, than in his second Book *de Tristibus*; nor is this to be wonder'd at, since he was to plead his own Cause before *Augustus*, a Prince of great Learning, and a Poet himself. Never was any thing in the *Latin* Tongue writ with more Wit and Elegancy than his eighth Elegy of the second Book *Ponticorum*, every thing in it is so neat, so fine, so pathetick, and so full of variety. He was vain and extravagantly fond of his own Compositions; what an Opinion he had of his Elegies, appears plainly by those two arrogant Verses of his in the *Remedia Amoris*:

Tantum.

*Tantum se nobis Elegi debere fatentur,
Quantum Virgilio nobile debet Epos.*

The World was as much obliged to him for the *Elegy*, as ever it was to *Virgil* for the *Epick*. This Remark had carried a greater Modesty, if it had come from any other Hand. There are good Judges who observe, that many of those Comparisons and Examples which he uses in his *de Tristibus*, and his other *Elegies*, are merely superfluous, and plainly shew that he was not arrived to a full Maturity of Judgment; and *Scaliger* remarks that his *de Tristibus*, and *de Ponto*, (both which Titles he finds fault with) are less elaborate than his other Pieces, and especially than his *Epistles*.

THE six Books of his *Fasti*, which he sent to *Germanicus* the Son of *Drusus*, contain Variety of choice Learning; the other six which he proposed were never finished, his sudden Death, or his unfortunate Exile prevented his Design. The Style of this Poem is easy, soft, and natural, though the Subject is not always equally tractable, nor capable of being adorned, nor has he often Scope enough for his Wit; yet, says *Scaliger*, in many Places he goes beyond himself in Purity and Politeness. *Selden* calls this Poet a Great Canon Lawyer, upon the account of his *Fasti*, which give us the best Account of the Religion and Festivals of the old *Romans*.

THE *Epistles* are said to be the most polite part of all *Ovid's* Works; the Thoughts, says *Scaliger*, are admirable, his Elegancy natural and easy, they have a true Poetical Air; *Rapin* calls them
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the Flower of the Roman Wit, yet he owns they fall much short of that Maturity of Judgment, which is the chief Perfection of *Virgil*.

HIS *Art of Love*, and his Amorous Compositions are criminal and of pernicious Example; yet they have had their unchaste Votaries in all Ages. The Writers of the *August History* relate, that the Emperor *Ælius Verus* was so delighted with that little Piece of *Ovid de Arte Amandi*, that he would often read him in his Bed, and when he went to sleep, he used to put him under his Pillow. There have been many, says *Cornelius Agrippa*, both *Greek* and *Latin* Poets, who have discover'd their wanton Amours more like Pandars than Poets, tho' all of them were outdone by *Ovid* in his Heroical Epistles, dedicated to *Corinna*, which were exceeded by himself in his *Art of Love*, and might better have been called the *Art of Whoring and Pimping*. The Learning and the unchaste Documents of this Poem was the Pretence of the banishing of the Author by *Augustus* to the remotest Parts of the North.

THE *Metamorphosis* of *Ovid* is said to be copied after one *Parthenius* of *Chios*, who had written an excellent Poem upon the same Subject; this Work of *Ovid's* was so highly esteemed by the *Græcian* Wits, that they translated it into their own Language. He has shewed Wit and Art in this Piece, but his Youthfulness would scarce be pardon'd but for the Vivacity of his Wit, and a peculiar Happiness of Fancy. His Style, says *Borrichius*, in this Poem is not so lofty as in some of his other Compositions, but yet there is Beauty and Exactness in it. This Work is in this respect highly to be admired,

in that it does, in that wonderful Order, and as it were with a certain Chain and Concatenation present to us almost all the Fables of the Ancients, from the Beginning of the World to that very Time,

SOME Criticks have despised the *Latin* of this Poet, as if he was as corrupt in his Style and Poetry, as he was in Life and Morals. They would have met but with a sorry Reception from *Alphonso* King of *Naples*: That Prince being with his Army in the Neighbourhood of *Sulmo*, asked if it was certain that *Ovid* was born there? and the People assuring him that he was, he saluted the Town, and paid his Acknowledgment to the Genius of the Country, that had produced so great a Poet. It is said that the Pen of *Ovid* was found about two Centuries ago at *Taurunum*, a Town of the Lower *Hungary*, with this Inscription, *Ovidii Nasonis Calamus*. It was discover'd under some ancient Ruins, and presented to *Isabella* Queen of *Hungary*, who set a great Value upon it, and preserved it as a most venerable Relique.



SENECA.



S E N E C A.

LUCIUS ANNÆUS SENECA was born at *Corduba* in *Spain*, about the Beginning of the *Vulgar Æra*, a Philosopher and Poet, and Uncle to *Lucan*. *Monsieur Baillet* tells us, that of all the ten *Latin Tragedies* which are collected and published in a Body under the Name of *Seneca*, it is generally agreed that the best of them were writ by this famous Philosopher, *Nero's Tutor*, and that he was really the Author of the *Medea*, the *Hippolitus* and the *Troades*; the rest, says he, have their Excellencies, tho' the Authors of them are not well known. The meanest, and that which seems the most unworthy of the Name of *Seneca*, is the *Ostavia*, to which others join the *Thebais*, which is the Work of a Declaimer, who knew nothing of what belong'd to Tragedy. *Lipsius* could by no means believe that *Seneca* ever wrote the *Troades*; he had so mean an Opinion of this Tragedy, that he took it for granted it was either writ by some little paltry Poet, or by some ignorant Pedant. *Scaliger* was much offended at this severe Censure of *Lipsius*, from whom he intirely differ'd, calling this Tragedy a *Divine Work*, and to be preferred before any of the other Nine, all which he believes were writ by *Seneca*. However this be, we may conclude with *Vossius*, that tho' *Seneca* may not be the Author of those several Tragedies, which we commonly see ascribed to him, yet there is no doubt

doubt to be made, but some of them were really his; and therefore a suitable Account of his Life and Poetical Writings may be justly expected in this Place.

SENECA, a Spaniard of Corduba, (a Roman Colony of great Fame and Antiquity) was of the Family of *Annaeus*, of the Order of Knights. His Father *Marcus* was famous for his Eloquence at Rome, a Man of Letters, some of whose Works are now extant, and who was distinguish'd from the Son by the Name of the O-rator. His Mother's Name was *Helvia*, a Woman of excellent Qualities. His Father came to Rome in the time of *Augustus*, and his Wife and Children soon followed him, our *Seneca* yet being in his Infancy. There were three Brothers of them, and never a Sister; *Marcus Annaeus Novatus*, *Lucius Annaeus Seneca*, and *Lucius Annaeus Mela*. The first of these changed his Name for *Junius Gallio*, who adopted him; to him it was that he dedicated his Treatise of *Anger*, whom he calls *Novatus* too; and he also dedicated his Discourse of a happy Life to *Gallio*. The youngest Brother, *Annaeus Mela*, was *Lucan's* Father. *Seneca* was about twenty Years of Age in the fifth of *Tiberius*. His Father train'd him up to Rhetorick, but his Genius led him rather to Philosophy, and he applied his Wit to Morality and Virtue. He was a great Hearer of the celebrated Men of those Times, as *Attalus*, *Papirius*, *Fabianus*, (of whom he makes often mention) and he was a great Admirer of *Demetrius* the Cynique, whose Conversation he had afterwards in the Court, and both at home also and abroad, for they often travelled together. His Father

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was not at all pleased with his Humour of Philosophy, and forced him upon the Law, and for a while he practised Pleading. After which he would needs put him upon publick Employments. And so, notwithstanding his Philosophick Studies, he came first to be Questor, then Prætor, and some will have it that he was chosen Consul; but whether he bore those Honours before or after his Banishment, is uncertain.

IN the first Year of the Emperor *Claudius* he was banished into *Corfica*, when *Julia* the Daughter of *Germanicus* was accused by *Messalina* of Adultery and banish'd too, *Seneca* being charged as one of the Adulterers. But *Messalina* dying, and *Agrippina* being married to *Claudius*, she prevail'd upon the Emperor to recall *Seneca*, after he had suffer'd an Exile of above eight Years. In this Retirement, it is said, that he chiefly diverted himself in writing Tragedies, and other Poetical Amusements. She afterwards recommended him as Tutor to her young Son *Nero*; had that young Prince attended to the Wisdom of his Præceptor through the Course of his Reign, with the same Attention he did for the first five Years of his Government, he would have been the Delight, as he afterwards proved the Detestation of Mankind. As *Nero* grew weary of the Advice of his Master, *Seneca's* Interest soon declined at Court, and finding he had ill Offices done him, went directly to the Emperor with an Offer to refund all he had gotten, which *Nero* would not receive; however, from that time the Philosopher changed his Course of Life, received few Visits, shunned Company, went little abroad, still pretending

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to be kept at home either by Indisposition or by his Studies.

SENECA had two Wives, the Name of the first is not mentioned, his second was *Paulina*, whom he often speaks of with great Passion; by the former he had his Son *Marcus*. His Estate was partly Patrimonial, but the greatest part of it was owing to the Bounty of his Prince: His Gardens, Villas, Lands, Possessions, and incredible Sums of Money, are agreed on all hands. *Dio* reports him to have had Two hundred and fifty thousand Pounds Sterling at Interest in *Britain* alone, which he called in all at a Sum.

THE Manner of his Death is particularly given by *Tacitus*: Now follows, says he, the Death of *Seneca*, to *Nero's* great Satisfaction; not so much for any pregnant Proof against him, that he was of *Piso's* Conspiracy, but *Nero* was resolved to do that by the Sword, which he could not effect by Poison; for it is reported that *Nero* had corrupted *Cleonicus* (a Freedman of *Seneca's*) to give his Master Poison, which did not succeed; for he lived only upon a simple Diet, as the Fruits of the Earth, and his Drink was most commonly River-Water.

NATALIS, it seems, was sent upon a Visit to him (being indisposed) with a Complaint, that he would not permit *Piso* to visit him; to whom *Seneca* made answer, That frequent Meetings and Conferences between them, could do neither of them any good, but that he had a great Interest in *Piso's* Welfare. Upon this, *Granius Silvanus* (a Captain of the Guard) was sent to examine *Seneca* upon the Discourse that had passed between him and *Natalis*, and to return

turn his Answer. *Seneca*, either by Chance or upon Purpose, came that day from *Campania* to a Villa of his own, within four Miles of the City; and thither the Officer went the next Evening and beset the Place. He found *Seneca* at Supper with his Wife *Paulina*, and two of his Friends, and gave him immediately an Account of his Commission. *Seneca* told him, that it was true that *Natalis* had been with him in *Piso's* Name, with a Complaint that *Piso* could not be admitted to see him, and that he excused himself by reason of his Want of Health, and his Desires to be quiet and private, and that he had no reason to prefer another Man's Welfare before his own; *Cæsar* himself, he said, knew very well that he was not a Man of Compliment, having received more Proofs of his Freedom than of his Flattery.

THIS Answer of *Seneca's* was deliver'd to *Cæsar* in the presence of *Poppæa* and *Tigellinus*, the intimate Confidants of this barbarous Prince; and *Nero* asked him, whether he could gather any thing from *Seneca*, as if he intended to make himself away? The Tribune's Answer was, That he did not find him at all affected with the Message, nor so much as change Countenance upon it. Go back to him then, says *Nero*, and tell him that he is condemn'd to die. *Seneca* receiv'd the Message without Surprise or Disorder; he calls for his Will, which being refused him by the Officer, he turned to his Friends, and told them, That since he was not permitted to requite them as they deserved, he was yet at liberty to bequeath them the Thing of all others that he esteemed the most, that is, the Image of his Life, which should give them the Reputation

putation both of Constancy and Friendship, if they would but imitate it; exhorting them to a Firmness of Mind, sometimes by good Counsel, otherwhile by Reprehension, as the Occasion required. Where, says he, is all your Philosophy now? All your premeditated Resolutions against the Violences of Fortune? Is there any Man so ignorant of *Nero's* Cruelty, as to expect, after the Murder of his Mother and his Brother, that he should even spare the Life of his Governour and Tutor? After some general Expressions to this purpose, he took his Wife in his Arms, and having somewhat fortified her against the present Calamity, he besought and conjured her to moderate her Sorrows, and betake herself to the Contemplations and Comforts of a virtuous Life, which would be a fair and an ample Consolation to her for the Loss of her Husband. *Paulina* on the other side tells him her Determination to bear him company, and orders the Executioner to do his Office. Well, says *Seneca*, if after the Sweetness of Life, as I have represented it to thee, thou hadst rather entertain an honourable Death, I shall not envy thy Example, consulting at the same time the Fame of the Person he loved, and his own Tenderness, for fear of the Injuries that might attend her when he was gone. Our Resolution, says he, in this generous Act may be equal, but thine will be the greater Reputation. After this, the Veins of both their Arms were opened at the same time. *Seneca* did not bleed so freely, his Spirits being wasted with Age and a thin Diet; so that he was forced to cut the Veins of his Thighs, and elsewhere to hasten his Dispatch. When he was far spent,

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and almost sinking under his Torments, he desired his Wife to remove into another Chamber, lest the Agonies of the one might work upon the Courage of the other. His Eloquence continued to the last, as appears by the excellent Things he deliver'd at his Death, which being taken in Writing from his own Mouth, and publish'd in his own Words, I shall not presume to deliver them in any other. *Nero* in the mean time, who had no particular Spite to *Paulina*, gave Orders to prevent her Death, for fear his Cruelty should grow more and more insupportable and odious. Whereupon the Soldiers gave all Freedom and Encouragement to her Servants, to bind up her Wounds and stop the Blood, which they did accordingly; but whether she was sensible of it or not, is a Question. For among the common People, who are apt to judge the worst, there were some of opinion, that as long as she despair'd of *Nero's* Mercy, she seem'd to court the Glory of dying with her Husband for Company; but that upon the likelihood of better Usage, she was prevail'd upon to outlive him. And so for some Years she did survive him, with all Piety and Respect to his Memory; but so miserably pale and wan, that every body might read the Loss of her Blood and Spirits in her very Countenance.

SENECA finding his Death slow and lingering, desires *Staius Annaus*, his old Friend and Physician, to give him a Dose of Poison, which he had provided before-hand, being the same Preparation which was appointed for Capital Offenders in *Athens*; this was brought him, and he drank it up, but to little purpose, for his Body was already chilled, and bound up against
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the Force of it. He went at last into a hot Bath, and sprinkling some of his Servants that were next him, This, says he, is an Oblation to *Jupiter the Deliverer*. The Fume of the Bath soon dispatched him, and his Body was burnt without any Funeral Solemnity, as he had directed in his Testament; though this Will of his was made in the height of his Prosperity and Power. There was a Rumour that *Subrius Flavius*, in a private Consultation with the Centurions, had taken up this following Resolution (and that *Seneca* himself was no Stranger to it) that is to say, that after *Nero* should have been slain by the Help of *Piso*, *Piso* himself should have been killed too, and the Empire deliver'd up to *Seneca*, as one that well deserved it for his Integrity and Virtue. Thus far *Tacitus*. He was about threescore at the time of his Death.

THE bright side of *Seneca's* Character, appears as an excellent Moralist, and a sound Philosopher; he does not make so considerable a Figure as a Poet, and a Writer of Tragedies; tho' in this respect, he writ, says *Borrichius*, in a pure Tragic Strain, he shew'd a decent Gravity, he was no ways inferiour to any of the *Greeks*, either for a Majestic Style, or for an exquisite Way of expressing himself; his Sentiments are sublime, and his Images lively and poetical, but the Fable and Execution of his Plays is irregular, he wants that noble Simplicity, and pathetic Manner which recommends *Euripides*, and he seems to have written more for the Use of the Closet, than of the Stage.

FOR a lofty and majestic sort of Verse, says *Scaliger*, *Seneca* came not behind the best of the *Greek*

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Poets, nay, he excelled *Euripides* in Politeness and Beauty. Invention, it must be owned; is the peculiar Property of the *Greeks*, but *Seneca* is not beholden to them for that lofty Air, that harmonious Sound; that Briskness of Fancy, which every where abounds in him. But, says *Rapin*, he knows nothing of Manners. He is a fine Speaker, who is eternally uttering pretty Sayings, but is in no wise natural in what he speaks, and whatever Persons he introduces, they always have the Mien of Actors. His Verse is pompous, his Thoughts sublime, because he would dazzle; but the Contrivance of his Fables is of no great Character; he pleases himself too much in giving his own Ideas, instead of real Objects, and he represents not very regularly what is to be represented.

ST. EVREMONT entertained a despicable Opinion of *Seneca* in every Capacity of his Writings. I have a great Respect, says he, for the Tutor of *Nero*, the Gallant of *Agrippina*, and for that ambitious Man, who pretended to the Empire. Of the Philosopher and Writer, I make but little Account; and am affected neither with his Style, nor with his Thoughts. His *Latin* has nothing of resemblance to that of *Augustus's* Time; it is neither easy nor natural, all made up of *Points*, all fanciful and conceited, more of the Heat of *Africa* or *Spain* in them, than the Beauty of *Greece* or *Italy*. You see there abrupt things that have indeed the Air and Shape of Sentences, but which have neither their Solidity nor good Sense, which whet and spur on the Fancy, without gaining the Judgment. His forced Discourse communicates to me a sort of Constraint, and the Soul, instead

of finding there its Satisfaction and Repose, meets with Trouble and Affliction:

NERO, he goes on, one of the most wicked Princes in the World, was yet very ingenious, and had near him a sort of Under-Masters, extremely curious, who used *Seneca* as a Pedant, and turned him into Ridicule. I never read his Writings, without being of quite contrary Sentiments to those which he would inspire his Readers with: If he attempts to recommend Poverty, I long for his Riches; his Virtue frightens me, and the least disposed to Vice, would abandon himself to Pleasures, by the Description he gives of them. He speaks so much of Death, and leaves me such melancholy Ideas, that I do my utmost Endeavours not to improve by his Lectures. His Style has nothing that affects me; his Opinions are too severe; and 'tis ridiculous, that one who liv'd in Abundance, and was so careful of himself, should encourage nothing but Poverty and Death.





L U C A N.

MARCUS ANNEUS LUCANUS was born at *Corduba* in *Spain*, in the Reign of *Caligula*, about the thirty-ninth Year of the common *Æra*. He was of an Equestrian Family, that had removed from *Italy*, and had for some time been settled in *Spain*, in which Province it had enjoy'd many honourable Employments. His Father was *Marcus Annæus Mela*, or *Mella*, a Roman Knight; a Man of excellent Qualities, and of great Interest in his Country, and had the additional Advantage of being Brother to the great Philosopher *Seneca*. His Mother was *Acilia*, Daughter of *Acilius Lucanus*, the most celebrated Orator of the Age in which he lived; from this Grandfather our Poet was called by the Name of *Lucan*.

HE could not, it seems, escape the Attendance of a Miracle in his Infancy, the same told of *Homer* and *Hesiod*, that a Swarm of *Bees* hover'd about his Cradle, and settled upon his Lips. His Father remov'd him to *Rome* when he was about eight Months old, that he might learn the *Latin Language* in its Purity, which effectually defeats the Malice of some Criticks, who censure his Style as if it received a Tincture from the Place of his Birth, and charge him with

with writing like a *Spaniard*. His Education was conducted with the greatest Care, suitable to the Forwardness of his Genius, and the Quality of his Family. He studied the Languages under *Palæmon* the Grammarian; *Flavius Virginius*, the most eloquent Orator of his time, was his Master in Rhetorick; and for Philosophy, he was placed under *Cornutus* the Stoic, to which Sect he ever after addicted himself.

His Proficiency under his Tutors exceeded Expectation, he frequently declaimed in *Greek* and *Latin* at fourteen Years of Age. *Seneca* sent him to *Athens*, where he completed his Studies. Upon his Return to *Rome*, the Recommendation of his Uncle, and his own Merits, which could not be concealed, introduc'd him into *Nero's* Favour, who made him a Quæstor before he was qualified by Age to bear that Office; he exhibited a Shew of Gladiators at a great Expence, and was afterwards admitted into the College of Augurs. His Fortune and his Fame increasing, he married *Polla Argentaria*, the Daughter of *Pollius Argentarius*, a Roman Senator, a Lady of Noble Birth, great Fortune, and famed Beauty, who, to add to her other Excellencies, was accomplish'd in all Parts of Learning, insomuch that the three first Books of the *Pharsalia* are said to have been revised and corrected by her in his Life-time. *Statius*, at the Request of this Lady, wrote a Poem in honour of the Anniversary of *Lucan's* Birth-Day, wherein he praises her Accomplishments.

*Formâ, Simplicitate, Comitatus,
Censu, Sanguine, Gratiâ, Decore.*

This Lady survived him many Years.

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How *Lucan* came to decline in *Nero's* Favour, we have no positive Account that I know of in History; it is agreed that he lost it gradually, till he became his utter Aversion. No doubt the Poet's Virtue, and his Principles of Liberty must make him hated by a Man of *Nero's* Temper; but there seems to have been a great deal of Envy in the Case, blended with his other Principles against him upon the account of his Poetry. Tho' the Spirit and Height of the *Roman* Poetry was somewhat declined, from what it had been in the time of *Augustus*, yet it was still an Art beloved and cultivated. *Nero* himself was not only fond of it to the highest degree, but, as most bad Poets are, was vain and conceited of his Performances in that kind. He valued himself more upon his Skill in that Art and in Musick, than on the Purple he wore, and bore it better to be thought a bad Emperor, than a bad Poet or Musician. *Lucan*, tho' then in favour, was too honest to applaud the bombast Stuff that *Nero* was every day repeating in Publick. *Persius* in his first Satire gives a Specimen of it;

Torva Mimalloneis, &c.

*Their crooked Horns the Mimallonian Crew
With Blasts inspir'd; and Bassaris who slew
The scornful Calf with Sword advanc'd on high,
Made from his Neck his haughty head to fly;
And Mænas, when with Ivy Bridles bound,
She led the spotted Lynx, then Evion rung around,
Evion from Woods and Floods repairing Echoes
 sound.*

At

AT the Celebration of the *Quinquennalia* it was proclaimed that *Nero* intended to recite the Story of *Niobe*, in a Poem of his own composing. He came off with Applause, and thought himself sure of the Prize; *Lucan*, fired with Indignation, stood up, and repeating a Poem on the Fable of *Orpheus*, carried off the Prize against him. This ruin'd his Interest for ever in that Prince, who sent him an Order next day never more to plead at the Bar, or repeat any of his Compositions in Publick, as the most celebrated Poets and Orators were used to do. It is no wonder that a young Man, an admirable Poet, and one conscious enough of a superiour Genius, should severely resent this barbarous Treatment; in revenge he omitted no Occasion to treat *Nero's* Verses with the utmost Contempt, and expose them and their Author to Ridicule. In this Behaviour towards the Emperor, he was seconded by his Friend *Persius*, and no doubt they often diverted themselves alone at *Cæsar's* Expence. *Nero* resented this Usage to the utmost, and took all Occasions of censuring and depreciating *Lucan* and all his Compositions.

ROME had now long groaned under the Cruelty of this Imperial Tyrant; *Nero* had rendered himself odious and insupportable by his monstrous Vices, which urged several of the first Rank, headed by *Piso*, into a Conspiracy, to rid the World of this Prodigy of Wickedness. *Lucan* hated him upon a double Account, as his Country's Enemy and his own, and went heartily into the Design. When it was ripe for Execution, it was discovered by some of the Accomplices, and *Lucan* was found among the

first of the Conspirators. They were condemn'd to die, and *Lucan* had the Choice of the manner of his Death. *Tacitus* asserts, that our Poet being put to the Torture, accused his Mother of being in the Plot. This Story seems to be a meer Calumny, and invented by the Tyrant or his Friends, to depreciate his Character, and to leave a lasting Blot upon his Memory. It is certain there are many Fragments of his Life where this Particular is not to be found.

HE chose to have the Arteries of his Legs and Arms opened in a hot Bath ; he supped cheerfully with his Friends, and then taking leave of them with the greatest Tranquillity, and the highest Contempt of Death, went into the Bath, and submitted to the Operation. When he found the Extremities of his Body growing cold, and Death's last Alarm in every Part, he thought of a Passage of his own in the ninth Book of the *Pharsalia*, which he repeated to the Standers-by with the same Grace and Accent with which he used to declaim in Publick, and immediately expired. He died in the Flower of his Life, and in the full Pursuit of Glory, in the twenty-seventh Year of his Age. The Passage was that where he describes a Soldier of *Cato's*, dying much after the same manner, being bit by a Serpent.

Sanguis erant Eachrymæ, &c.

*Now the warm Blood at once from every Part
Ran Poison down, and drain'd the fainting Heart ;
Blood falls for Tears ; and o'er his mournful Face,
The ruddy Drops their tainted Passage trace.*

Where-

*Where-e'er the liquid Juices find a Way,
 There Streams of Blood, there crimson Rivers stray,
 His Mouth and gushing Nostrils pour a Flood,
 And ev'n the Pores ouze out the trick'ling Blood.
 In the red Deluge all the Parts lie drown'd,
 And the whole Body seems one bleeding Wound.*

He was buried in his own Garden at Rome.

LUCAN wrote several Poems, the Combate of *Hector* and *Achilles*, the Fable of *Orpheus* upon the dreadful Fire at Rome, where it is said he severely glanced at *Nero*; some Books of *Saturnalia*; a Poem on the burning of *Troy*; an imperfect Tragedy of *Medea*. These, says *Statius*, were composed by *Lucan*, at an Age when *Virgil* had not yet written his *Culex*; nothing but the Titles of these Poems remains; we have his *Pharsalia* complete; on this Poem he staked his Reputation, and promised himself Immortality from it.

Invidia sacræ, &c.

*Nor Cæsar thou disdain that I rehearse,
 Thee, and thy Wars in no ignoble Verse.
 Since if in aught the Latian Muse excel,
 Thy Name and mine, immortal I foretel;
 Eternity our Labours shall reward,
 And *Lucan* flourish like the Grecian Bard;
 My Numbers shall to latest Time convey
 The Tyrant Cæsar and *Pharsalia's* Day.*

FEW Writers have been more exposed to the Censure of Criticks than *Lucan*; some call him an excellent Poet, others an indifferent Historian; some a furious Orator, others a Ma-

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thematician, a Philosopher and a Divine. *Quintilian* observes, that *Lucan* has a great deal of Heat and Fire, and is remarkable for his Sentences, but he chooses rather to number him among the Orators than Poets. *Scaliger* contends that *Lucan* was a Poet, and that the Grammarians do but trifle when they object that he wrote not a Poem, but a History. *Barthius* calls him a Poet of a great Genius, of extraordinary Learning, and of a true Heroick Character, who, from the very Time he lived, has always been esteemed a most considerable Author, especially among Philosophers, by reason of his Gravity, his Force, his Acuteness, and his weighty Sentences, which shine and are transparent through the whole Work, so that he scarce ever had his Equal in that kind. *Scaliger* confesses in another place, that *Lucan* was one of a vast Genius, but would often exceed the Bounds of Poetry, that he had an ungovernable Temper, and would fall out most extravagantly; that he had too much Fire in him, wanting that admirable and divine Temper which none ever had but *Virgil* only; he seems rather to bark than sing.

So uncertain are the Merits of this Poet in the Opinion of great Judges; the most temperate in their Censures, allow his Expression to be bold and lively, his Sentences strong and clear, his Fictions probable, and his Digressions, tho' not proper, are always instructive and entertaining; yet his Episodes and long scholastick Dissertations and Disputes, merely speculative on things that fall in his way, shew much of Constraint and Affectation. He has so masterly a Manner in his Descriptions, that you seem rather a Spectator

Spectator than a Reader of the several Transactions he relates, and he interests you so much by the Warmth of his Temper, which he communicates to his Writings, that you insensibly become a Person concern'd, and find your self engaged on the same Side with them, though you had resolv'd to be indifferent. He is judicious in discovering the secret Springs of Action, and looks very narrowly into the true Motives of human Undertakings, discovering their rise in our irregular Passions, and how those Passions influence all our Actions. He is often happy in applying the several Parts of Learning to his Subject, which he seldom treats with any great Delicacy or Discretion. But though in *Strada's* Opinion, *Calliope* cannot be said to be *Lucan's* inseparable Companion as she is *Virgil's*, yet, according to that Critick, he is conspicuously mounted on the Top of *Parnassus*, and manages his *Pegasus* with much Dexterity, still keeping tight in the Saddle, though he frequently seems in danger of losing it from the many Bounds he makes, the natural Spirit and Mettle of that Creature increasing, being animated by the Boldness of the Rider. *Gyraldus* observes, that one very ingeniously compared *Lucan* to a Horse that was not broke, which would ever and anon be running in the midst of some Meadow or Field, leaping and kicking up his Heels, but without any manner of Art or Order.

I shall conclude his Character with a Remark of Mr. *Dryden's*; he says, that *Lucan* followed too much the Truth of History, crouded Sentences together, was too full of Points, and too often offered at somewhat which had more the Sting of an Epigram, than of the Dignity and

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State of an Heroick Poem; he made no great use of his Heathen Deities. There was neither the Ministry of the Gods, nor the Precipitation of the Soul, nor the Fury of a Prophet in his *Pharsalia*. He treats you more like a Philosopher than a Poet, and instructs you in Verse, with what he had been taught by his Uncle *Seneca* in Prose. In one word, he walks soberly on foot, when he might fly. Yet *Lucan* is not always this religious Historian. The Oracle of *Appius*, and the Witchcraft of *Erietho* will somewhat atone for him, who was indeed bound up by an ill-chosen and known Argument, to follow Truth with great Exactness.



PERSIUS



P E R S I U S.

AULUS PERSIUS FLACCUS a Satirical Poet, who flourished under *Nero*, but was born of an Equestrian Family, about the twenty second Year of *Tiberius*, at *Volterra* in *Tuscany*, though some place his Birth in *Liguria*, which they found upon some Lines of the sixth Satire :

———— *Mihi. nunc Ligus, &c.*

*For me, my warmer Constitution wants
More Cold than our Ligurian Winter grants;
And therefore to my Native Shores retir'd,
I view the Coast old Ennius once admir'd:
Where Cliffs on either side their Points display,
And after opening in an ample way.
'Tis worth your while, O Romans, to regard
The Port of Luna, says our learned Bard.*

He was about six Years of Age when his Father *Flaccus* died, his Mother *Fulvia Sifenna* was married afterwards to *Fusus* a Roman Knight, and buried him in a few Years. He studied at *Volterra* till he was twelve Years of Age. He was then remov'd to *Rome*, where he continued his Studies with great Application under the Instructions

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structions of *Palæmon* the Grammarian, the Rhetor *Virginus Flaccus*, and *Cornutus* a *Stoick* Philosopher, the most learned Man of his time, of a most virtuous Life, and a Poet himself. The Philosophy in which *Perfius* was educated he professed his whole Life, and in this he excelled both *Juvenal* and *Horace*; he shifts not sides like *Horace*, who is sometimes an *Epicurean*, sometimes a *Stoick*, sometimes an *Eclectic*, as his present Humour leads him, nor declaims like *Juvenal* against Vices more like an Orator than a Philosopher. He is every where the same, true to the Dogma's of his Master, and stuck close to his own Philosophy. He contracted a strict Intimacy with this *Cornutus*, and by his Works immortalized the Friendship that was between them; he left him by a Codicil to his Will, his Library of seven hundred Books, and a great Sum of Money, but *Cornutus* accepted of the Books only, and gave the Money to his Sisters, who were his Heirs.

He began to write when he was very young, and applied himself to Satire upon reading the Writings of *Lucilius*; but the Verses he composed in his Youth, were suppressed by the Advice of *Cornutus*, who thought they would not answer the great Reputation of those that had been published, and were received with so great admiration by the Publick, that all the Copies were presently sold off. Among other of his Works, they suppressed some Verses he had made upon *Arria*, Wife of the unfortunate *Perfius*, an Illustrious Roman Lady, who killed herself to give an Example to her dear Husband.

He studied with *Lucan* the Poet under *Cornutus*, and was so much admired by his School-Fellow,

Fellow, that when *Persius* recited his Verses, *Lucan* could scarce forbear breaking out into Acclamations; which is a rare thing among Poets of the same Rank, but sometimes too common out of Cunning and Vanity. *Persius* became acquainted with *Seneca* very late, and could never endure his Temper. He was a good Friend, a better Son still, a better Brother, and a better Kinsman. He was very chaste, though a Person of exceeding Beauty; he was sober, as meek as a Lamb, and as modest as a young Virgin: so true it is, that we must not judge of a Man's Morals by his Writings, for some of the Verses of *Persius* are obscene and licentious, they are sharp and full of Bitterness. It is believed that he spared not the cruel *Nero*, and that he did so plainly hint at him, that *Cornutus* thought fit to alter some of his Words; he had written thus in his first Satire,

Auriculis Affini Mida Rex habet.

An Ass's Ears King Midas has.

Cornutus advised him to change them into these,

Auriculis Affini quis non habet?

An Ass's Ears who has not?

He died of a Pain of his Stomach, when he was about twenty eight Years of Age.

THE Works of *Persius* consist of six Satires; he begins them with a Prologue in Imitation of the Dramatic Poets. The Proëm to the first Satire

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Satire is very beautiful, and contains the Sum of all the rest:

O Curas hominum! O quantum est in rebus inane!

He acquired great Glory, says *Quintilian*, by these Compositions, and obtained more Credit, says *Martial*, by this one Book, than others did by many large Volumes.

*Sæpius in libro memoratur Persius uno
Quam levis in toto Marfus Amazonide.*

THIS Poet had certainly the advantage of great natural Parts, improved by a large Stock of acquired Knowledge. He was a professed Imitator of *Horace*. His Style is noble, figurative and poetical, and in general answerable to the Dignity of his Sentiments, which have all the Grandeur the *Stoic* Philosophy when judiciously applied could give them. The Wit and fine Ridicule that shine in every Line of *Horace's* Satires, he seems an utter Stranger to, his Wit does not shew it self in genteel Raillery, but in an insulting Sneer; it was not his Province to be witty. He shines most in recommending Virtue and Integrity; here it is that his Satire becomes him, and that Air of Sincerity that discovers it self in his Writings adds a new Grace to them. He has been equally ill treated by the Partizans of *Juvenal* and *Horace*. As a Poet, he is certainly inferiour to both, though in Virtue and Learning he was their Superiour. He was grave, and particularly opposed his Gravity to Lewdness, which was the predominant Vice of *Nero's* Court when he published his Satires, which

which was before that Emperor fell into the Excess of Cruelty.

FOR his Verse, the learned *Casaubon* himself (who understood him particularly well, and better than any of his former Commentators) can neither defend his Numbers, nor the Purity of his *Latin*; he gives this Point for lost, and pretends not to justify either the Measures or the Words of *Persius*. He is evidently beneath *Horace* and *Juvenal* in both. And as his Verse is scabrous and hobbling, and his Words not every where well chosen, the Purity of *Latin* being more corrupted than in the time of *Juvenal*, and consequently of *Horace*, who writ when the Language was in the Height of its Perfection; so his Diction is hard, his Figures are generally too bold and daring, and his Tropes, particularly his Metaphors, insufferably strained.

NOTWITHSTANDING all the Diligence and Penetration of his Expositors, *Persius* is still obscure; whether he affected not to be understood but with Difficulty, or whether the fear of his Safety under *Nero* compelled him to this Darkeness in some places, or that it was occasioned by his close way of thinking, and the Brevity of his Style, and crouding of his Figures; or lastly, whether after so long a time many of his Words have been corrupted, and many Customs and Stories relating to them lost to us, whether some of these Reasons, or all, concurred to render him so cloudy, it must be said, that the best of his Commentators can but guess at his meaning in many Passages, and none can be certain that he has divined rightly. *Casaubon* excuses the general Obscurity of *Persius*, by alledging that it was designed. *se defendendo* for

for fear of *Nero*, and that he was commanded to write so cloudily by his Master *Cornutus*. The Poet seems not to have wanted many Lectures to be read to him upon that Subject; he was an apt Scholar, and when he was advised to be obscure in some places where his Life and Safety were in question, he took the same Counsel for all his Books, and never afterwards wrote ten Lines together clearly. He is obscure, says *Bayle*, not out of Policy, but because he had such a Taste, and had given such a Turn to his Genius; for if the fear of bringing himself into Trouble at Court, had moved him to cover his Conceptions with a thick Cloud, he would have done it only in such Matters, as had some relation to the Life of the Tyrant; but we see that he twists his Words, and has recourse to Allusions and Enigmatical Figures, even when he is about to insinuate only a Moral Maxim, the clearest Explication whereof could not have afforded *Nero* the least pretence of being angry with him. I shall give no Examples of it, but refer to his Satires, which sufficiently prove it.

SCALIGER has a mean Opinion of the Writings of *Persius*, particularly of his Style; he calls him a silly trifling Author, a perfect Braggadocio; one who valued himself much upon the account of his Learning, which was hot and feverish. He affected nothing so much as to render himself obscure, for which reason he was called *the blind* and *the dark Poet*. Not but that he has some Touches of a hidden Delicacy, but these Strokes (says *Rapin*) are always wrapped up in so much profound Learning, that there needs a Comment to unfold them. He may properly be called the *Lycophron* of the *Latins*, upon the account

count of his Darkneſs ; and St. *Jerame*, who could not underſtand the Riddles and Obſcurities of this Poet *intellecturis ignibus ille dedit*, committed them to the Fire to be unfolded. His *Morofeneſs*, ſays the *French Critick*, never leaves him, he ſpeaks not of the leaſt things but in a Heat, and he never ſports but in the moſt ſerious manner in the World. *Vaſſius* will have it, that *Persius* either did not underſtand the Rules of Satire, or at leaſt, that he never obſerved them, becauſe he only attack'd ſome few particular Perſons inſtead of reprov- ing Vice in general ; and when he had a mind to touch upon the Faults or Actions of ſuch particular Perſons, he commonly makes uſe of ſome general Name, ſuch as *Titius* or *Nævius*, which does not give us light enough to know either the Fact or the Perſon ; and therefore this Poem of his does ſcarce deſerve the Name of a Satire, becauſe he reflects upon no body by Name. I am ready, ſays *Vaſſer*, to give to *Persius* the Deference that is due to him ; I allow him his Jeſts, his dry Rubs, his Wit and his Sarcaſms, nor will I take from him his *Latin*; which as it is not the very beſt, ſo I muſt own it is none of the worſt. Theſe are the Cenſures that are to be met with in the Writings of the Learned, who have ſate in Judgment upon the Works of this Poet.

BUT after all it muſt be allowed, that *Persius* was a young Man like his Friend and Contemporary *Lucan*. Both of them Men of extraordinary Parts, and great acquired Knowledge conſidering their Youth. But neither of them had arrived at that Maturity of Judgment which is neceſſary to the accompliſhing of a form'd Poet ; and this Conſideration, as it lays ſome Imperfections.

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perfections to their Charge, so on the other side, 'tis a candid Excuse for those Failings which are incident to Youth and Inexperience; and we have more reason to wonder how They, who died before the thirtieth Year of their Age, could write so well, and think so strongly, than to accuse them of those Faults from which human Nature, and more especially in Youth, could never possibly be exempted.



SILIUS



SILIUS ITALICUS.

CAIUS SILIUS ITALICUS was born under the Emperor *Tiberius*, but the Year of his Birth cannot be fixed; he derived his Descent from the noble and ancient Family of the *Silii*; the Place of his Nativity is likewise uncertain; the common Opinion is, that he was born at old *Seville* in *Spain*, called *Italica*, and from thence he obtained his Surname; others suppose he was born at *Confinium* in *Italy*, which, according to *Strabo*, had the Name of *Italica* given it during the Social War.

WHEN he came to *Rome* he applied himself to the Studies and Practice of the Bar, and succeeded so well, that by a close Imitation of *Cicero*, and his Form of Pleading, he became a celebrated Advocate, and a most accomplished Orator. His Merit and Character recommended him to the highest Offices in the Republick, so that he obtained the Consulship, and executed that Office when *Nero* died: He lay under the Infamy of being a false and cruel Informer under that bloody Emperor, who made use of him in accusing Persons of Fortune and Honour, whom he had devoted to Destruction. But he behaved with more Honesty and Virtue under *Vitellius*, in whose Favour he held a principal Place,

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Place, and at the same time preserved his Credit with the Publick.

VESPASIAN sent him as Proconsul into *Asia*, where he behaved with clean Hands and an unblemished Reputation. Old Age now came fast upon him, and having spent the best part of his time in publick Offices, he retired to a private Life, resolved to spend what remained of it, in Ease and the delightful Exercises of Poetry. He had several Country Villas, one at *Tusculum*, which had been *Cicero's*, and a Farm at *Naples*, said to have been *Virgil's*. It is certain, he paid the highest Veneration to the Memory of that Poet, and annually celebrated his Birth-day with great Solemnity: He lived many Years in these Retirements, indulging his Muse in her old Age, when she grew languid and had lost her Fire. He lived to see his eldest Son Consul; his other Son, a Youth of promising Hopes, died before him. He was tormented with an incurable Ulcer, which afflicted him with insupportable Pains, and compelled him, according to the heroic Bravery of the *Romans*, by refraining from Meat to put an end to his own Life. *Martial*, who had been much obliged to him, compliments him in this manner. *L. 2. Ep. 49.*

*Silius hæc magni celebrat Monumenta Maronis,
Jugera fecundi qui Ciceronis habet.
Hæredem Dominumque sui tumulique larisque
Non alium mallet nec Maro nec Cicero.*

*Silius here celebrates great Maro's Praise,
And Tully's Acres he at ease enjoys.*

Virgil

SILIUS ITALICUS. 287

*Virgil and Cicero would surely choose,
My Silius for their Heir, and all the World refuse.*

SINCE we know little of *Silius* but what we collect from *Pliny* the younger, it will be proper to insert the Character he gives of this Poet in a Letter to his Friend *Caninius*: It is the seventh Epistle of the third Book.

I Am just informed of the Death of *Silius Italicus* in his *Neapolitan* Farm, occasioned by a Habit of Illness arising from too long an Abstinence. He was afflicted with an incurable Tumor in the Foot, a lingering Evil which he bore with Constancy to his Death. A Man entirely happy to the last, except in the Loss of the youngest of his two Sons; but he left the eldest, and better of them, in a flourishing State, and past the Consulship. He impaired his Reputation under *Nero*: He was believed to second his violent Impeachments very willingly; but he behaved himself very wisely and agreeably in his Friendship with *Vitellius*. He acquired great Applause as Proconsul of *Asia*, and wiped off the Stain of his former ill-turned Application by a laudable Indolence. Among the principal Men of the City, he seemed insensible of Power; and was therefore without Envy. He was much saluted and courted, and while he was very much confined to his Bed, his Chamber was filled with a number that did not address him on the Score of his Fortune: When at leisure from Writing, he past the Day in the most learned Conversation. He wrote Verse with more Labour than Fire; and sometimes tried the Judgments of Men by rehearsing.

‘ Lately

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‘ Lately inclined by his Years he retired from
 ‘ the City, and made his abode in *Campania*,
 ‘ and was not removed even by the arrival of the
 ‘ new Emperor *Trajan* in that Country. It was
 ‘ a distinguishing Praise of *Cæsar* to allow that Li-
 ‘ berty, and of him that he had the Courage to
 ‘ make use of it. He was fond of new things to
 ‘ an Objection of being addicted to buy for the sake
 ‘ of Buying. He was possessed of many Country
 ‘ Seats in the same Places; and when he took a
 ‘ fancy to a new Purchase he neglected an old
 ‘ one. He had a multitude of Books, of Statues,
 ‘ and of Images, which beyond a meer Posses-
 ‘ sion he also revered. First in Esteem he
 ‘ held *Virgil*, whose Birth-day he celebrated with
 ‘ greater Solemnity than his own, mostly at
 ‘ *Naples*, where he frequented his Monument as
 ‘ a Temple. In this peaceful Course of Life,
 ‘ he reach’d beyond his seventy fifth Year, with
 ‘ a Tenderness rather than an Infirmary of Bo-
 ‘ dy. And as he was the last Consul of *Nero*,
 ‘ so he expired the last of his Consuls; and it
 ‘ is remarkable, that *Nero* died when he was
 ‘ Consul. When I reflect upon this, I am touch-
 ‘ ed with a Compassion of human Frailty.’

SILIUS in the Decline of Life, and far ad-
 vanced in Years, attempts an *Epic* Poem, which
 he composed in seventeen Books, and chose for
 his Subject the History of the *second Punick War*.
 He was stimulated to this Work beyond his Na-
 tural Heat, by his superstitious Admiration of
Virgil, whom he set before him as an Exam-
 ple; and resolved to imitate; but he fell in-
 finitely short of the Pattern, for though he
 had a tolerable Genius for Poetry, yet his Sub-
 ject

ject was most improper for an *Epic* Poem : His Story was flat and common, every Circumstance of the *Punic* War was fully known, so that he was tied down to Historical Facts, and the Scope of his Fancy was cramped and restrained ; yet *Martial* compliments him as the Honour and Ornament of the Age in which he lived.

Sili Castalidum decus sororum, &c.

*Silius the Glory of the Castalian Sisters,
Who sing'st in lofty Verse the perjur'd Rage,
And treacherous Pride of Hannibal, &c.*

IT must be allowed that *Silius* had some of those great Qualities required to form a great Poet. He had Learning Historical, Moral and Natural. His Characters are often noble and just, and the Sentiments great and beautiful. His Images are poetical, but the Expression, the Colouring is weak, and often spiritless. He is Master of many Excellencies, but often loses the Influence of the ætherial Particle, that Enthusiastic Fire which strengthens every Figure, and animates every Line in *Homer* and *Virgil*. Though he does not always creep, and can sometimes rise with Dignity and Gracefulness, yet he weakened his Fire by attempting to imitate *Virgil's* Correctness. He has many Excellencies, and would be much more esteemed were he more known. *Silius Italicus*, says *Rapin*, is much more regular than *Statius*. He owes more to his Industry than to his Nature. There seems some Judgment and Conduct in his Design, but nothing of Greatness and Nobleness in his Expression ;

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pression; and if one may rely on the younger *Pliny's* Judgment, there is *more Art than Wit*, in his Poem; it is rather the History of the *Panick War* than a Poem.

PETRARCH writ a Poem upon the same Subject, which, 'tis probable, he would never have done had he seen this of *Silius*, which was not found till long after his Death, in the time of the Council of *Basil*.



STATIUS.



S T A T I U S.

PUBLIUS PAPINIUS STATIUS was a Citizen of *Naples*, and born there, about the beginning of the Reign of the Emperor *Claudius*; his Father was of a good Family at *Sellæ*, a Town of *Epirus*, whose Ancestors had been famous for their Learning and Civil Accomplishments, and made a considerable Figure in that Place for many Generations. He received his Education under his Father, who opened a School of Rhetoric and Oratory in *Naples*, and met with suitable Encouragement from Men of the first Quality, who employed him in the Care of their Children. He removed afterwards to *Rome*, and engaged in the same Profession with equal Success.

HERE our Poet fell in love with a young Widow, named *Claudia*, a Musician's Daughter, a Person of good Wit, and fine Improvements in many Parts of Learning, especially in Poetry: She proved a virtuous and chearful Companion, and was of use to him in some of his Compositions, particularly in his *Thebaid*:

——— *Longi tu sola laboris*
Conscia, cumque tuis crevit mea Thebais annis.

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*Thee only conscious of my Pains I lov'd,
And with thy Years my Thebais improv'd.*

He inscribed many of his Verses to his Wife, whom he always mentions with tenderness and honour, and as a mark of his Love and Esteem, he behaved himself to a Daughter whom she had by her first Husband with singular regard and paternal Affection.

STATIUS it seems had obtained three Prizes in the *Alban Games*, but lost the Victory in the *Capitol*. His Character was soon established at *Rome*, and his occasional Poems introduced him among the great Wits of the Age, whom he frequently took occasion to praise and compliment in his *Silvæ*, or his Miscellaneous Writings. It is very remarkable, says *Vossius*, that *Martial*, who was a great Admirer of *Stella* the Poet, should never make any mention of *Statius*, who was so intimate with *Stella*, that he dedicated to him the first Book of his *Silvæ*. This he supposes might proceed from Envy and Emulation in *Martial*, who could not bear, that *Papinius* was so much in *Domitian's* favour, because he had so quick a Talent in making extempore Verses, which *Martial* pretended to as his own particular Province. He was recommended to the Emperor's Favour by *Paris* a favourite Actor, who obtained the honour for him of being admitted to sit at Table with the Emperor among his chief Ministers. He artfully insinuated himself into the Esteem of this cruel Tyrant by his extravagant Compliments and gross Flatteries, who distinguished him by very honourable Rewards, particularly he made him a Present of a *Golden Crown*, when he won the

the Prize in the *Alban Mount*, at the *Quinquatria*, Games celebrated in honour of *Minerva*. It is supposed his Circumstances were low before he became acquainted with *Paris*, and that he was obliged to sell his Poems to the best Bidder for Subſiſtance; for *Juvenal* mentions a Tragedy called *Agave*, which was purchaſed by *Paris*, who from a Player was become a Man of Fortune and a chief Favourite.

Curritur ad vocem jucundam, &c. Sat. 7.

All Rome is pleas'd when Statius will rehearſe,
And longing Crouds expect the promis'd Verſe;
His lofty Numbers with ſo great a Guſt,
They hear and ſwallow with ſuch eager Luſt:
But while the common Suffrage crown'd his Cauſe,
And broke the Benches with their loud Applauſe,
His Muſe had ſtarv'd, had not a Piece unread,
And by a Player bought, ſupply'd her Bread.

THE Miscellanies of *Statius*, which he called *Silvæ*, were the Foundation of his publick Character among the Wits of *Rome*. *Naugerius* a noble *Venetian* of great Learning, had a contrary Opinion of theſe little Pieces; for being told that ſome of his Poetical Writings had in them much of the Style of *Statius*, he was ſo enraged at the Compariſon, that he threw them into the Fire and ſaw them conſumed.

His next Attempt was his *Thebaid*, in which he was aſſiſted by *Maximus Junius*, a Man of Quality of ſingular Learning. This Poem coſt him twelve Years labour, and he was far advanced in Age before he finiſhed it; he put his laſt hand to it at *Naples*. His laſt Attempt

was his *Achilleid*, but he had made little Progress in this Work before Death prevented him, which happened at *Naples*, in the Reign of *Trajan*.

STATIUS, says *Borrichius*, the Favourite of *Domitian*, wrote several things in a learned and lofty Style, but many were lost, and among others, that famous Tragedy of his the *Agave*, which by reason of his Poverty, he was obliged to sell to *Paris*, that he might publish it as his own. We have extant his *Silvæ* in five Books, his *Thebaid* in twelve Books, and his *Achilleis* in two; in all which Pieces his Style generally appears to be florid, choice and magnificent; yet in his *Silvæ*, the Style is purer, and more natural; in his *Thebaid*, fuller of Art; and in his *Achilleis* it is more uneven. Hence, therefore, some of the Criticks declare, that it is with *Statius* among the Poets, as it was with *Alexander* the Great among the Heroes; that his great Virtues were mixed with great Vices; his Verse sometimes runs in a truly lofty, majestick Strain; sometimes he mounts above the Clouds in a high Bombastick Style; and then again, *Icarus* like, he falls from the greatest height down to the very ground. And therefore *Strada* very properly supposes *Statius* to be seated upon the highest part of *Parnassus* Hill, and in so much danger, that he seems to be like a Man, who is just ready to fall. I may add, his Writings could scarce be even and correct, when he congratulated himself on having spent but two Days about the *Epithalamium* of *Stella*, which contained two hundred seventy eight Verses.

SCALIGER is immoderate in his Praise, he calls him a most polite and a most ingenious Poet; he says there are none either of the Ancients or
 80
 Moderns,

Moderns, that tread so near to the Heels of *Virgil*, and that he had come nearer him if had not affected to follow him too close. Being in his own Nature high and lofty, whenever he endeavoured to excel and exert himself, he presently fell into Expressions that were too haughty and swelling. But beyond Dispute, unless it be that Phoenix of the Age, *Virgil*, there are none of the Heroic Poets, whether *Greek* or *Latin*, that can be compared to *Statius*, whose Verses are to be preferred before those of *Homer*. He had that Veneration for *Virgil's* Memory, that he frequently visited his Tomb, and celebrated his Birth-day with great Solemnity.

This Poet has met with different Treatment from *Rapin* and some others, who charge him with the Affectation of great Words and swelling Expressions, that he fills the Ear without ever touching the Heart; that he was of unbounded Imagination without the Poize of Judgment; that he is as fantastical in his Ideas as in his Expressions; and that his two Poems, the *Thebais* and *Achilleis* have nothing in them regular, all is vast and disproportionable.





JUVENAL.

DECIMUS JUNIUS JUVENALIS was born about the beginning of the Reign of the Emperor *Claudius* at *Aquinum*, a Town belonging to the Territory of the ancient *Volsci*, and since famous for having given Birth to *Thomas Aquinas*, the famous Father of Scholastic Philosophy. Our Poet's Father was a rich Freedman, who gave him a liberal Education, and, agreeable to the Custom of those Times, bred him up to the Bar, and to the Study of Eloquence, in which he made a very great Progress. He studied first under *Fronto* the Grammarian, and afterwards as it is generally conjectured under *Quintilian*, who is thought to have seen some of his Satires. He never consider'd himself among the Rich and Wealthy, yet in the eleventh Satire, he describes his Country House, his Entertainment and his Attendants, which argue a sufficient Plenty and Competency for so wise a Mind.

BESIDES his Acquaintance with *Umbricius*, a famous *Aruspex* mentioned in his third Satire, he was singularly beloved and esteemed among his chief Friends, by *Martial* the Poet, who addresses three several Epigrams to him (Lib. 7. Ep. 23. and 91. and Lib. 12. Ep. 18.) where he gives him the Title of the Eloquent, and proves that

Juvenal

Juvenal followed the Bar. The last was written by *Martial*, after he was retired to *Bilboa*, which was under *Trajan*; he speaks of our Author as a Man yet in full Vigour, and as if he had written but few Satires yet. The greatest part of his Works came out very late in Life, and he had long distinguished himself by his Eloquence at the Bar, and improved his Fortune and Interest at *Rome* before he thought of Poetry, the very Style of which in his Satires, speaks a long Habit of Declaiming.

WE are told he recited the first Essay which he made, being above forty, to a small Audience of his Friends, but being encouraged by their Applause, he hazarded a greater Publication; which reaching the Ear of *Paris*, *Domitian's* chief Favourite at that time, though but a Pantomime Player, whom he had severely insulted, that Minion made his Complaint to the Emperor, who banished the offending Poet into *Egypt*, (to *Pentapolis* a City of *Lybia*, says *Suidas*) though he was eighty Years old, as *Giraldus* observes in his account of the *Latin* Poets, under the pretence of giving him the Præfecture of a Cohort. Upon this account he is called by *Sidonius Apollinaris*, *Irati Histronis Exul*.

*Ille et Militiæ multis largitur honorem,
Semestri vatum digitos circumligat auro,
Quod non dant Proceres, dabit Histrio.*

He can dispose of Honours and Commands,
The Pow'r of Rome, is in an Actor's hands.
The peaceful Gown and military Sword,
The bounteous Player outgives the pinching Lord.

And

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*And wouldst thou, Poet, rise before the Sun,
And to his Honour's lazy Lovee run?
Stick to the Stage, and leave thy sordid Peer,
And yet, Heav'n knows, 'tis earn'd with Hardship
there.*

HE was not idle during his Stay in Egypt, but made such Observations upon the Superstitions and Religious Differences of the People, as he afterwards wrought up into a Satire, which is the fifteenth in the Order they are commonly published.

AFTER Domitian's Death, Juvenal return'd to Rome, sufficiently cautioned not only against attacking the Characters of those in Power, but against all personal Reflections upon the Great Men living; and therefore he thus wisely concludes the Debate he is supposed to have maintained with a Friend in the first Satire, which seems to be the first he wrote after he returned from Banishment. *Experiar quid concedatur, &c.* He is supposed to have died about the eleventh of Adrian's Reign. That he lived to be an old Man, we may conclude from the eleventh Satire, where he says of himself, and of *Persecus* to whom he writes,

*Nostra bibat vernum contracta canticula Solem,
Effugiatque Togam.*

*Our aged Limbs we'll bask in Phœbus' Rays,
And live this Day devoted to our Ease,*

As to his Person, we are told he was of a large Stature, which made some think him to have been of Gallic Extraction. We meet with

nothing relating to his moral Character, or way of Life ; but both from the manner of his Punishment by *Domitian*, and the whole Tenor of his Writings, he seems to have been a real Friend to Sobriety and Virtue. There is no mention that he ever was married, nor is it at all probable, if we consider the Opinion he had of the Women of those times, whom he bitterly and with extravagant Acrimony lashes in his sixth Satire.

THE Writings of *Juvenal* consist of sixteen Satires, which have justly had their Admirers among the Learned in all Ages, and indeed the Works of this Poet are so complete a System of Morality, and so perfect a Body of useful Philosophy, they express so just a Rage against the shocking Vices of the Times in which he lived, that he has scarce left any thing unsaid upon the Subjects he made choice of. The Jealousy and the high Guilt of the Age, obliged him often to draw Characters, and represent Crimes under the Names of Persons who had been long dead ; for the Corruption was too great and universal, and the Power of the Vicious too formidable to be attacked without danger ; and this wary Method of his has been followed successfully by succeeding Satirists in many States and Countries, who have laboured under the same Misfortunes.

MANY and lofty are the Elogies bestowed upon the Satires of this Poet ; he is so full of divine Sentiments, and his Sentences are so grave and moral, that he may properly be called *The Prophet of the Latin Poets*. Many prefer his Pieces before all the Morals of *Aristotle*, and some pronounce

nounce him equal to *Seneca* and *Epicætetus*. He is styled *Censor Morum liberrimus* ; and is, says *Stapleton*, a most excellent Poet, his Verse flowing like a River when the Wind breathes gently, smoothly near the Banks, and strong in the Current. In the same Arguments, he never came short of *Horace*, but often outwent him ; his eighth Satire upon *True Nobility* far exceeds *Horace's* sixth upon the same Subject. Compare *Juvenal's* tenth with *Horace's* first, and then, says *Scaliger*, *Sanè ille tibi Juvenalis Poeta videtur, hic Horatius, jejunæ cujuspiam Theseos tenuis Tentator* ; you will confess *Juvenal* to be the Poet, and *Horace* to be some poor Theme-maker. *Horace*, he goes on, is a meer Scoffer, his Speech is vulgar, his Verse negligent, only his *Latin* is pure ; but *Juvenal ardet, instat, apertè jugulat* ; his Purity is *Roman*, his Composure happy, his Verse better, his Sentences sharper, his Phrase more open, and his Satire more accurate. *Horace* did not more exceed *Lucilius*, than *Juvenal* *Horace*, whether we respect the Variety of Arguments, the Dexterity of Handling, the Plenty of Invention, the Frequency of Sentences, the Sharpness of Reprehension, as also his Raillery and Good Manners. *Juvenal*, says *Holyday*, is to be preferred to *Horace* for his Ardour, his Loftiness, and his Freedom, and tho' I willingly admire the Happiness of *Horace* in his Lyricks, yet I cannot but think he very much untuned himself, in his fall from the Ode to the Satire. Besides, *Juvenal's* Change of the Ancient Satire was not only a Change, but a Perfection ; for what is the End of Satire, but to reform ? Whereas a perpetual

Grim

Grin does rather anger than amend. Wherefore the Old Satire and the New, and so *Horace* and *Juvenal*, may seem to differ, as the Jester and the Orator, the Face of an Ape and of a Man, or as the Fiddle and Thunder. *Horace* was a slight superficial Satirist, who only laugh'd from the Teeth outward, whereas *Juvenal* bit to the very Bone, and did not often suffer his Prey to escape strangling and being put to death.

To form an exact Comparison between *Horace* and *Juvenal* is a difficult Undertaking; a Dispute has always been between the Favourers of the two Poets. If it be only argued which of them was the better Poet, the Victory is already gained on the side of *Horace*; *Virgil* himself must yield to him in the Delicacy of his Turns, his Choice of Words, and perhaps the Purity of his *Latin*; he who says that *Pindar* is inimitable, is himself inimitable in his Odes. But the Contention between these two great Masters is for the Prize of Satire, in which Controversy all the Odes and Epodes of *Horace* are to stand excluded. It must be granted by the Favourers of *Juvenal*, that *Horace* is more copious and profitable in his Instructions of human Life, but *Juvenal* is the more delightful Author; I am profited by both, I am pleased by both, but I owe more to *Horace* for my Instruction, and more to *Juvenal* for my Pleasure. *Juvenal* is of a more Vigorous and Masculine Wit than *Horace*, he gives me as much Pleasure as I can bear; he fully satisfies my Expectation, he treats his Subject home; his Spleen is raised, and he raises mine; I have the Pleasure
of

of Concernment in all he says; he drives his Reader along with him, and when he is at the End of his Way, I willingly stop with him; if he went another Stage, it would be too far, it would make a Journey of a Progress, and turn Delight into Fatigue. When he gives over 'tis a sign the Subject is exhausted, and the Wit of Man can carry it no farther.

IF a Fault can be justly found in *Juvenal*, it is that he is sometimes too luxuriant, too redundant, says more than he needs, but never more than pleases. Add to this, that his Thoughts are as just as those of *Horace*, and much more elevated. His Expressions are sonorous and more noble, his Verse more numerous, and his Words are suitable to his Thoughts, sublime and lofty. All these contribute to the Pleasure of the Reader, and the greater the Soul of him who reads, his Transports are the greater. *Horace* is always on the *Amble*, *Juvenal* on the *Gallop*, but his Way is perpetually on Carpet Ground; he goes with more impetuosity than *Horace*, but as securely, and the Swiftneſs adds more lively Agitation to the Spirits. The Sauce of *Juvenal* is more poignant to create in us an Appetite of reading him: the Meat of *Horace* is more nourishing, but the Cookery of *Juvenal* more exquisite; so that granting *Horace* to be the more general Philosopher, we cannot deny that *Juvenal* was the greater Poet, I mean in *Satire*. His Thoughts are sharper, his Indignation against Vices more vehement, his Spirit has more of the Commonwealth Genius; he treats Tyranny, and all Vices attending it, as they deserve, with the utmost Rigour; and consequently

frequently a noble Soul is better pleased with a zealous Vindicator of *Roman Liberty*, than with a *Temporizing Poet*, a well-manner'd Court-Slave, and a Man who is often afraid of laughing in the right Place, who is ever decent because he is naturally servile. After all, *Horace* had the Disadvantage of the Times in which he lived, they were better for the *Man*, and worse for the *Satirist*; those enormous Vices practised under the Reign of *Domitian*, were unknown in the time of *Augustus Cæsar*; *Juvenal* therefore had a larger Field than *Horace*, little Follies were out of doors when Oppression was to be scourged instead of Avarice; it was no longer time to turn into Ridicule the false Opinions of Philosophers, when the *Roman Liberty* was to be asserted; there was more need of a *Brutus* in *Domitian's* Days to redeem or mend, than of a *Horace*, if he had then been living, to laugh at a Fly-catcher.

RAPIN does not distinguish with that Advantage to the Character of *Juvenal*. That Delicacy, says he, which properly gives the Relish to Satire, was heretofore the Character of *Horace*, for it was only by way of Jest and Merriment that he exercised his Censure. He knew well that the Sporting of Wit had more effect than the strongest Reasons, and the most sententious Discourse, to render Vice ridiculous; in which *Juvenal* with all his Seriousness has so much ado to succeed; for indeed that violent way of declaiming which he uses, has most commonly very little Effect, he scarce persuades at all, because he is always in Choler, and never speaks in cold Blood. 'Tis true, says the *French Critick*,

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Critick, he has some *Common Places* of Morality that may serve to dazzle the weaker sort of Apprehensions, but with all his strong Expressions, energetick Terms, and great Flashes of Eloquence, he makes little Impression, because he has nothing that is delicate, or that is natural ; it is not true Zeal that makes him talk against the Misdemeanors of that Age, it is merely a Spirit of Vanity and Ostentation.



MARTIAL



MARTIAL.

MARCUS VALERIUS MARTIALIS, a Latin Poet, born at *Bilbilis*, now called *Bubiera*, a Town of the ancient *Celtiberia* in *Spain*, which is the Kingdom of *Arragon*. That Town stands upon the River *Sala*, or *Halo*, that falls into the *Ebro* above *Saragossa*. His Father was called *Fronto*, and his Mother *Flaccilla*, as he owns himself in the thirty-fifth Epigram of the fifth Book. He was born, it is supposed, in the Reign of *Claudius* the Emperor. When he was twenty Years of Age he came to *Rome* under *Nero*, and there continued thirty-five Years under the Emperors *Galba*, *Otho*, *Vitellius*, *Vespasian*, *Titus*, and *Domitian*, by whom he was advanced to the Tribune and Equestrian Dignity: This Emperor likewise gave him the *Jus trium Liberorum*, the Privileges of a Citizen that had three Children.

He was sent to *Rome* to qualify himself for the Bar, but finding he had no great Genius nor Inclination that way, he alter'd his Design, and applied himself to the Study of Poetry. He succeeding in this Pursuit, and acquired a happy and elegant way of Writing, which introduced him into Acquaintance with the most polite Wits of that Age, *Silius Italicus*, *Stella*, and *Pliny* the Younger, who in one
of

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of his Epistles gives him a good Character. *Sertinius*, a noble *Roman*, had so great an Esteem for the Compositions of this Poet, that he placed his Statue in his Library while he was living, and the Emperor *Verus* usually called him his *Virgil*, which was a considerable Honour to his Character.

AFTER a long stay at *Rome* without any Improvement of his Fortune, he turned his Eyes towards his native Country, for his Poverty deprived him of the common Comforts of Life; his fulsome Flattery of *Domitian* was no Advantage to his Circumstances, *Trajan* at length became tired of him, and his Friends forsook him, so that he was reduced to the lowest Distress, which he complains of;

Sum fateor semperque fui, Callistrate, Pauper.

IN this melancholy Condition he retired to *Bilbilis*, the Place of his Birth, declining in his Years, as he says of himself, and gray-headed; and this Journey he could not have undertaken, if his Friend *Pliny* had not contributed to the Expence of it. He met with better Fortune in his own Country, for there he married *Marcella*, (a second Wife, it is supposed) a Woman of a good Fortune, whom he exceedingly commends and admires, and for very good Reasons; for she had a House and fine Gardens, which she made him a Present of, and settled upon him. Here he finish'd his twelfth Book of Epigrams, at the Desire of his Friend *Priscus*, a Man of Consular Dignity, who came to him into *Spain*, and to whom it is inscribed as his Patron.

Sum fateor semperque fui, Callistrate, Pauper.

Patron. He died about the seventy-fifth Year of his Age. The other two Books, that is, the thirteenth and fourteenth, are called *Xenia*; and *Apophoreta*, and are conceived by most Judges to have been written by some other Hand.

HIS Friend *Pliny* hearing of the Death of *Martial*, was much affected with the News, and gives the following Character of him in a Letter to *Priscus*; it is the twenty-first Epistle of the third Book.

T O P R I S C U S.

I Hear *Valerius Martialis* is dead, and take it much to heart; he was a Man of Wit and Parts, of a sharp and poignant Turn of Thought; there was a good deal of Salt and Gall in his Writings, and as much Candour and Ingenuity. I made him a Present at our Parting, that Compliment I paid to our Friendship, as well as to the Honour I owed him for the Verses he composed on me. It was usual with our Ancestors generously to reward those who had by their Writings advanced the Character of particular Places or Persons, a Custom that, with some others equally good, is quite out of fashion in our days: For since we have left off doing Actions worthy of Praise, we wisely conclude Praise to be highly impertinent. You may perhaps ask me, What were the Verses that I thank'd him for? I would refer you to the Book it self, only I happen to remember some of them. If you like these, it will engage you to look for the rest in the Collection of his Works. He addresses himself to the Muse to make a Visit to my House on the *Esquiline*

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‘quiline Hill, and orders her to do it with a
‘great deal of Deference and Good Manners.

‘*Sed me tempore non tuo, &c.*

‘But O take heed, my gentle Muse,
‘That you a happy Minute chuse;
‘And unoppress’d by Bacchus’ Weight,
‘Affront not Pliny’s learned Gate.
‘For he gives all his studious Days
‘To solemn Philosophick Lays;
‘And fond of pleasing list’ning Rome,
‘Both in this Age and all to come,
‘Composes Books in such a Vein,
‘As dare to vie with Tully’s Strain.
‘Better to go (by Martial’s Warning)
‘At the late Lamp, or early Morning.
‘Your Hour is when the Bottle passes,
‘When all’s Perfume, and Noise and Glasses,
‘This Season’s yours, when rosy Garlands crown
‘Each Brow, and Cato’s stern forget to frown.

‘Was I not in the right in parting in the most
‘indearing manner, with a Man who wrote
‘this on me, and whom I now bewail as dear-
‘ly? He gave me all in his power, and would
‘have given me more, had he had more to give.
‘Tho’ between Friends, what greater Gift can
‘be bestowed, than Praise, Honour, and Eter-
‘nity? But it may be said, his Writings will
‘not be Eternal; perhaps not, but he wrote
‘them as if they were to be so. *Adieu.*

THE Poet lashes Cato’s Gravity, upon the
account of an Accident that happened at the

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Ep. 3.

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Floral Games, where Women appeared naked before all the People. The same *Cato*, says *Valerius Maximus*, being present at the *Floral Games* which *Messius* the *Ædile* exhibited, the People had so much modesty as not to require that the Courtezans should be stripped; which when he understood from *Favonius*, his intimate Friend who sat by him, he left the Theatre, lest his Presence might be a hindrance to the usual Spectacle. The People followed him with loud Acclamations, and then proceeded according to Custom, declaring they had a greater regard for the Majesty of that one Man, than for that of the whole Assembly. *Martial* justly laughs at this Behaviour of *Cato*; Why did he go to those Games, since he knew what was practised there? Did he go there only to go out again? This the Poet reproaches him with. Ep. 3. lib. I.

*Nosset jocosæ dulce cum sacrum Floræ,
Festosque cujus & licentiam vulgi,
Cur in Theatrum, Cato severe, venisti?
An ideo tantum veneras, ut exires?*

Why cam'st thou *Cato* 'midst that gamesome Croud,
No Stranger to the Revels there allow'd?
Thou knew'st 'twas *Flora's Feast*, why cam'st thou
then?
Was it for this, say, to go out again?

It has happened to this Poet, that those who have criticized his Writings have shewn him in two opposite Characters; his Admirers are extravagant in his Commendations. The Genius
of

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of *Martial*, say they, was extensive and lively ; no Subject came amiss to him, and he was certainly capable, had the good Taste of the Age encouraged him to it, to keep up the Spirit of the *Epigrammatick* Poetry, without the poor Helps of false Wit and Obscenity ; and his Works were received with universal Applause in all the polite Parts of the *Roman* Empire. He was a pleasant, witty Poet, says *Turnebus*, he has no Notion how he came to be called a *Buffoon* ; that his Epigrams, let Men say what they please, are writ with a great deal of Elegance.

THE peculiar Properties of an *Epigram*, says *Scaliger*, are Brevity and Smartness ; this last Quality *Catullus* did not always arrive at, but the most acute *Martial* never failed ; many of his Epigrams, he goes on, are Divine, his Style is pure and exact, and very proper for that great Variety of Matter he was concerned with ; and tho', says *Morhofius*, he be charged by some ill-natur'd Criticks with sometimes using the *Spanish* Dialect, yet this ought not to deprive him of the Honour that is justly his due, for his great Elegancy in the *Latin* Tongue.

BUT notwithstanding the Authority of such considerable Advocates, some Writers make bold with his Character, and treat him in a very scurrilous manner. He is, says *Muretus*, if compared with *Catullus*, an idle saucy Fellow, a meer Droll. His Epigrams, says *Giraldus*, never pleased any but a Company of Asses. His Epigrams, says *Raphael Volaterranus*, are not fit to be read, they contain neither Elegancy nor Morality : and *Vossius*, with a just Moderation observes, that *Martial* was one of those Authors,

thors, who, at the same time he reprov'd Vice, taught it ; and though he deserv'd great Commendation for many of his Epigrams, yet by those few that are obscene, he had done infinitely more mischief than by the others he had done good.

*Sunt bona, sunt quædam mediocria, sunt mala plura
Quæ legis hic : aliter, non sit, Avite, Liber.*

*As most Books are, so Epigrams, my Friend,
Some good, indifferent some, more badly end.*



VALERIUS



VALERIUS FLACCUS.

CAIUS VALERIUS FLACCUS was born at *Sezzo*, or *Setia*, a Town of *Campagna di Roma*, from whence he had the Name of *Setinus*, but lived most part of his time at *Padua*. He was Cotemporary with *Martial*, who held an intimate Friendship with him, and advised him to leave the beggarly Study of Poetry, and apply himself to the Bar, as the more profitable Profession of the two. He died before he had put the finishing hand to his Work, about thirty Years of Age. This short Account is the whole that remains of the Life and Death of this Poet.

FLACCUS chose for his Subject the History of the *Argonautic Expedition*, which he writ in eight Books, in imitation of *Apollonius Rhodius* upon the same Subject. *Quintilian* laments his untimely Death, and that it was a great Loss to the Learned, that he did not live to correct his Works. He addresses his Poem to the Emperor *Vespasian*, and enters upon it with a pompous Invocation of *Apollo*, but his Muse soon jaded.

Phæbe mone si Cumææ, &c.

*If conscious at Cumæan Rites I bend,
And at the hallowed Service pure attend,*

If

*If undefil'd thy laurel'd Wreath I wear,
Phœbus inspire my Numbers, hear my Pray'r.*

HE seems rather to imitate than to translate the Greek Poet *Apollonius*, whose Work, tho' he had before him, and by comparing it with those of *Homer* and *Virgil*, might have made his Advantages in treating the same Subject; yet without using the help of a Guide, he gave himself up wholly to his own Invention, and succeeded accordingly. However, *Apollonius* has been far from suffering where *Flaccus* has seemed to translate him; none of his Spirit has been lost in the Transfusion, and he may be placed in the Number of those few Authors, whose Copies have rival'd their Originals. He had a true Genius for Poetry, which would have been more distinguish'd, had he arriv'd at riper Years, and a more discerning Judgment. He profess'dly imitated *Virgil*, and often does it in a happy Manner, and is in general far from deserving to be so much neglected as he has been, in comparison of other Poets, no ways superiour to him, either for their Matter, Style, or Versification. And this Character is consistent with the Observation of the best Judges, who have remark'd upon him.

SCALIGER, to excuse the harsh Style of this Author, laments that he died before he had time to review his *Argonauticks*; but he allows him to be a Person of Wit, of a happy Fancy, of a solid Judgment, and of extraordinary Diligence and Application; that his Verses have a pleasant and harmonious Sound, tho' his Poem has none of those other Graces and Beauties, which are the Ornaments of Poetry.

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He is really, says *Barthius*, a more considerable Poet, than he is generally allowed; they are either Pedants, or your half learned Men, who neglect to read him through an Opinion that his Style is harsh and disagreeable; whereas he is a Poet of no inconsiderable Quality, of a noble and elevated Air. However some will not be induced to confess his Poetical Genius, his Learning, his Gravity, and his Judgment; yet *Flaccus* appears more considerable, when he marches alone, than when he treads in the Footsteps of *Apollonius* the *Rhodian*. *Borricius*, in his Dissertation upon the Poets, confesses that *Flaccus* had very often high and noble Flights, his Style was florid enough, though it had Unevennesses sometimes, and seemed a little rugged, which undoubtedly he would have softened and polished had he lived some time longer. But *Rapin* reduces him to the lowest Order of Poets; he is cold and flat, says he, affecting a Loftiness of Expression, and not having a Genius for it; his Poem is extremely mean, the Fable, the Contrivance, the Conduct, all is of a very low Character.



AUSO.



AUSONIUS.

DECIMUS MAGNUS AUSONIUS, one of the most excellent Poets of the fourth Century, was a Native of *Bourdeaux* in *France*, and the Son of *Julius Ausonius*, Physician to the Emperor *Valentinian*. He was born at *Bazas*, and settled at *Bourdeaux*; his Wife's Name was *Emilia Aonia*, and was the Daughter of *Cæcilius Argisius Arboreus*, who fled into *Aquitain* after a Proscription, which had deprived him of all the Estate he had in the Country. This *Arboreus* having fixed himself in the City called *Aquæ Tarbellorum*, married a virtuous Woman of little or no Fortune, whose Name was *Emilia Corinthia Maura*. From this Marriage proceeded one Son and three Daughters; the Son was *Emilius Magnus Arboreus*, who taught Rhetoric at *Toulouse*, and who took such a particular Care of the Education of our Poet. One of the Daughters was married to *Julius Ausonius*, and brought him four Children, of which our *Ausonius* was the second. He draws out a particular Character of his Father's Virtues in his *Parentalia*, or *Epicedion in Patrem*; and if he was like the Picture which his Son has left of him, he was a Remnant of the Golden Age.

HE was educated with a very particular Care, the whole Family interested themselves in it,

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either because his Parts were very promising, or because the Scheme of his Nativity had prognosticated that he should attain to great Honours. It seems *Cæcilius Argicius Arboreus*, his Grandfather by the Mother's side, understood Astrology, and had calculated this Nativity, but never discover'd it to his Family. Many Years after his Death his Daughter accidentally discover'd it. *Ausonius* informs us of these Particulars himself.

Tu cæli Numeros & conscia Sidera, &c.

*Thy Art from conscious Stars our Lives can date,
And in Heaven's Aspects read the Book of Fate;
There all my future Fortunes didst thou trace,
And in thy Schemes the pleasing Secret place.
But what the Grandfire with such Care conceal'd,
The curious Mother's prying Eye reveal'd.*

He adds, that *Arboreus* meeting from time to time with adverse Fortune, and lamenting his Son, who died at thirty Years of Age, comforted himself under his Afflictions, with the Expectation of those Dignities which the Stars had promised to his Grandchild.

Dicebas sed te, &c.

*Pleas'd with the Honour Fate for me design'd,
No longer thy own Grievs distract thy Mind.
Ev'n now thou smilest among the Dead, to see
This full Accomplishment of Fate's Decree:
To see me thus adore thy pious Shade,
A Questor, Prefect, and a Consul made.*

He supposes his Grandfather's Soul, even in the Abode of the Blessed, was sensible of the

Ac-

Accomplishment of the *Horoscope*, and of the particular Dignities which our Poet had obtain'd at the Emperor's Court. He is less Orthodox in another Place, for he there questions whether any thing of us remains after Death.

Et nunc sine aliquid, &c.

*And now if after Death there aught remains,
In thy blest Shade sweetest Remembrance reigns:
Or if thy Grave no farther Prospect give,
Yet thy past Life will make thy Fame still live.*

HE made a surprising Progress in Learning, and at the Age of thirty Years was appointed to teach Grammar in *Bordeaux*. Some time after he was promoted there to the Office of Professor of Rhetoric. He acquired so great a Reputation in this Employ, that he was invited to the Imperial Court, to be Præceptor to *Gratian*, Son of the Emperor *Valentinian*. He made himself very agreeable both to his Pupil and to his Pupil's Father, and received from them such Rewards and Dignities, as made him a very eminent Example of *Juvenal's* Maxim,

Si Fortuna volet, sis de Rhetore Consul.

*If Fortune pleases,
A Rhetorician may become a Consul.*

He was, in effect, raised to the Consulship by the Emperor *Gratian*, in the Year Three hundred seventy-nine, after having gone through other considerable Offices; for besides the Dignity of Questor, with which he was honoured in

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the Life of the Emperor *Valentinian*, he was created Præfect of the *Prætorium* in *Italy* and in *Gaul*, after the Death of that Prince. The Thanks which he gave to the Emperor *Gratian* for his Promotion to the Consulship, is an excellent Performance. The Time of his Death is not certainly known, but without question he lived to a very great Age. He had married a Wife of a good Family who died young; he had some Children by her, and did not marry any more. He was much esteemed by the Emperor *Theodosius*, and some believe that Monarch conferred on him the Dignity of a *Patrician*. They found this on a Letter which appears in most Editions at the beginning of *Ausonius's* Works. Nothing can be more obliging than that Letter. Some Criticks judge it to be supposititious, but they cannot deny that this Emperor very much esteemed *Ausonius's* Poems, and exhorted him to publish them, for this appears by a Preface which is incontestably the Poet's own.

THE Criticks have exercised themselves with inquiring, whether *Ausonius* was a professed Christian; *Vossius*, and some others, pronounce him a Heathen Poet, and appeal to the Testimony and the Epistles of *Paulinus* to him; and therefore conclude that those Christian Compositions usually ascribed to him, must undoubtedly be the Work of another Hand. Those who consult *Paulinus's* Works, find nothing there to persuade them that *Ausonius* professed Paganism; and since *Paulinus* no where uses any pressing Exhortation to him to be baptized, they conclude he had already professed the Gospel. They infer

it yet more certainly from those express Words they meet with there.

*Non reor hoc sancto sic displicuisse Parenti,
Mentis ut errorem credat, sic vivere Christo.*

*I hope my Holy Tutor now will find
The Christian Faith no Error of the Mind.*

So that the Reading of *Paulinus's* Works proves the very reverse of what *Hossius* and some others have asserted, it demonstrates that *Ausonius* was a professed Christian. It is therefore without foundation that some would take from this Poet what appears in praise of Christ, in his Collection of Verses. Tho' we should deprive him of the *Carmen Paschale*, and the excellent Piece which begins with

Omnipotens solo mentis mihi cognite cultu,

As some Criticks would, yet there would be enough left in his Works to confute those who affirm he was a Pagan. *Baronius* observes, that *Ausonius* was educated by two Nuns, who were his Aunts; this is a Proof that he was of a Christian Family. Now Christianity being upon the Throne in those times, and Paganism exposed to Disgrace and Persecution, it seldom happen'd that a Christian turned Pagan. Since then *Ausonius* was educated from his Infancy in Christianity, we ought to believe he professed it all the Days of his Life; for nothing is more absurd than the Thought of *Giselinus*, who says, that *Claudian* and *Ausonius*, being prevailed upon by the Authority and Eloquence of the Pagan *Symmachus*,

machus, abjured the Christian Faith, and plung'd themselves again into Idolatry.

THERE is an extreme Inequality in the Works of *Ausonius*, either because his Muse was a little too inconstant, or because some Pieces have been inserted in his Poems, which he had but rough drawn, or because some particular Reasons obliged him to permit the Publication of some Verses, which he had not time to polish. Generally speaking there is something harsh in his Manner and in his Style, but it was rather the Defect of the Age, than of his Genius. They who are good Judges of Poetry, can easily see that if he had lived in the *Augustan* Age, some of his Verses would have equalled the best of that time, so much Delicacy and Wit appear in most of his Writings. He had certainly a fine Genius, and a great Compass of Learning and Eloquence, but he neglected to cultivate his Parts, and often employ'd himself upon trifling Subjects. Many of his little Compositions were the Amusements of his leisure Hours, written for the use of his own Grandchildren or of some particular Friends; but he was so vain and careless, that scarce any thing finish'd came out of his Hands. His Epigrams are many of them Translations of the *Greek*, and have but little Spirit or Elegance; his Love-Verses made upon *Bissala*, a fair *German* Slave that he set at liberty, are imperfect. He wrote Verses upon the seven wise Men; upon the principal Cities of the *Roman* Empire; upon the Contents of *Homer's Iliads*, and *Odyssee*. He has left Epistles and other Miscellaneous Works: But his most celebrated Piece, in the Opinion of *Scaliger*, is his Poem upon the *Moselle*; this, he says, was
so

so elaborate a Work, that had *Ausonius* writ nothing else, that would have been sufficient to have procured him the Character of a great Poet, there being in it a great deal of Art, Method, fine Language, Genius, Candor, and Sharpness.

AUSONIUS, notwithstanding his Profession of Christianity, is justly condemned as a lascivious, filthy Writer. Some Epigrams, says *Scaliger* the Father, are so detestably obscene, that they deserve neither Writer nor Reader, and instead of the Sponge, they seem to merit no other Purification than that of the Flames. I wonder, he says nothing against the Obscenities of the *Cento Nuptialis*, written in the Decline of Life, which have principally excited the Indignation of several other Authors. Mr. *Baillet* observes justly, It were, says he, to be wished that somebody had expunged the abominable *Cento*, that wicked Piece of *Patchwork*, which he made up of several half Verses of *Virgil*, on Subjects purely amorous. It is with much Justice that the University of *Paris* complained forty Years ago of the Malice of this Poet in making *Virgil* speak in so very lewd a manner, who, of all the Poets of Antiquity, was most celebrated for his Chastity. Father *Briet*, a Jesuit, has carried his Zeal yet further, when he represents this Action of *Ausonius* to us as an Outrage highly penal, declaring it to be as great a Piece of impudent Assurance, as of scandalous Obscenity, to make such a Misapplication, and that there was something Diabolical rather than Human, in that pernicious Art of perverting things, and changing good into bad, to lay Snares for the Innocence and Integrity of

Youth. These Reflexions are justly laid upon the Filthiness and Infection of this Composition, and *Ausonius* seems to take shame to himself, and confess as much; for after he had described the Wedding-Feast, the Procession of the Bride and Bridegroom, the Wedding-Presents, the Compliments of the Company, and having modestly enough represented the first Discourse of the married Couple, he stops there, and advertises the Readers, that what he had to say more, not being covered with a Veil, it was their part to decline going any farther.

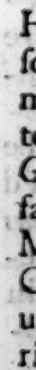
‘ Thus far, says he, I have veiled the Nuptial-Mystery with many Words and long Descriptions for an Entertainment to modest Ears; but because the matrimonial Solemnity requires some smutty Mirth, and Custom has authorized these loose Descriptions, the remaining Secrets of the Chamber and Bed will be given you by the same Author, who must blush again and again for imposing upon *Virgil’s* Words so impudent a Meaning. You that please may stop here, and leave the rest to those who are more curious.’

AUSONIUS composed this Nuptial-Piece of Patchwork at the Instance of the Emperor *Valentinian*, who had treated the same Subject in the same ludicrous manner. He excuses himself by observing that a Princee cannot express any sort of Command more absolute than that of a Request; he found himself much perplexed, for in writing a wicked Poem, he exposed himself to the Accusation of grossly sacrificing his Reputation to Flattery, and by writing a better Poem than that of the Emperor, he was like to be condemned for his Insolence, in having

the Assurance to be more witty than his Master. But to do the Poet all the Justice which the Delicacy of his Wit and Pen deserves, let us hear his own Words in his Preface to that Piece. 'I am ashamed to have disgraced the Dignity of *Virgil's* Poetry on so jocular a Subject; but what could I do? I was commanded to do it; and which is the most absolute sort of Command, I was desired to do it by him, who could have commanded it, even by his Sacred Imperial Majesty *Valentinian*, a Prince, in my Judgment, truly learned, who had himself treated the same Subject in the same manner in very apt and witty Poetry. Desiring therefore to try how far he should excel in this our Tryal of Skill, he commanded me to undertake the Work. You will readily imagine I had a very nice Task. I was neither willing to excel nor be excelled; if I fell short, it would look in the Judgment of others like Flattery; if I outdid, it would seem Insolence. I undertook it therefore with an Appearance of Unwillingness, and by a happy Course I kept in favour as an Equal, and offended not as a Superiour.' If it be true that the *Genio Nuptialis* of the Emperor *Valentinian* was not inferior to that of *Ausonius*, it must be said that this Monarch was not unskilled in Poetry; and besides, as he was grave, and of exemplary Chastity, it may serve, in some measure, to justify the Conduct of this Poet.

THE Censors of Poetry have judged with Tenderness upon the Writings of *Ausonius*; they say, he is every where so full of Wit and Smartness, that he never suffers his Reader to fall asleep.

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CLAUDE M. N.



CLAUDIAN.

THO' the Place of his Birth is uncertain, yet *Claudius Claudianus* is commonly said to be born at *Alexandria* in *Egypt*, about the beginning of the Reign of *Valentinian* the first, of the Vulgar *Æra* Three-hundred sixty-five. He finished his Studies at *Alexandria*, a famous Academy in that Age, and as renowned as *Athens* for the Education of Youth; his Knowledge of the *Greek* Tongue was so perfect, that he enter'd his Muse, and compos'd his first Attempts in Poetry in that Language. About thirty Years old he came to *Rome*, and publish'd his first Poem, as he confesses to *Probinus* the Consul, who was his Friend and Patron,

Romanos bibimus primum, te Consule, Fontes.

His elegant Compositions and polite Learning soon admitted him into the best Company among Men of Taste and Merit, particularly into the Favour and Esteem of *Stilico*, a Noble Goth, who had the whole Administration of Affairs under the Emperor *Honorius*. This Prime Minister distinguish'd himself by his Valour and Conduct under *Theodosius*, who heaped Honours upon him, made him General of his Forces, married him to his Niece *Serena*, and upon his
Death.

Death-bed recommended to him the Care of the Empire, and made him the Guardian of his Children. Supported by this extraordinary Power, and the great Interest he had in *Honorius*, to whom he had married his Daughter *Maria*, he began to raise Schemes of settling the Empire in his own Family; but his Ambition proved fatal, his Treason was discover'd, for which he and his Son *Eucherius* deservedly suffered Death. The Ruin of *Stilico* fell heavily upon *Claudian*; for *Hadrian*, who was the succeeding Favourite, a Captain of the Guards who had detected the Conspiracy, persecuted our Poet as a Dependant upon *Stilico*, and resolved to ruin him both in Person and Fortune. *Claudian* complains of the barbarous and unjust Usage he had received from this Minister, he expostulates with him by Letter, but finding no redress, and reduced to the lowest Fortune, and unsupported by his Friends, who were either banished or put to death, he observed no Temper, but gave a loose to his Resentment, and severely handled the Favourite in Lampoons and bitter Invectives.

THOUGH he suffered by the unforgiving Spirit of *Hadrian*, yet we find by his Writings, that the Compliments and Panegyricks he bestowed upon the Consulship of *Honorius*, were not thrown away or unrewarded; for he enjoyed many Employments Civil and Military, but of what Nature or Value, cannot be discover'd. But he was eminently distinguish'd by a singular Honour he received from *Arcadius* and *Honorius*, and the general Vote of the Senate, who erected to him a Statue of Brass in *Trajan's Forum*, with the following Inscription.

TO CLAUDIUS CLAUDIANUS, Tribune and Notary, and among other great Qualifications, the most excellent of Poets; though his own Works are sufficient to make his Name immortal, yet as a Testimony of their Approbation, the most learned and most happy Emperors Arcadius and Honorius, at the Request of the Senate, have ordered this Statue to be erected, and placed in the Forum of Trajan.

This Epigram was inscribed below,

Rome and the Cæsars here his Statue raise,
Who Virgil's Genius join'd to Homer's Lays.

CLAUDIAN was married to a Lady of great Quality and Fortune in Libya, by the Interest of the Princess Serena. The Time of his Death is uncertain, nor can we meet with any other Particulars of his Life.

THIS Poet valued himself, and laid the Foundation of his Character upon his Poem of the Rape of Proserpine, a curious Subject, and a celebrated Story in the Heathen Mythology, and capable of the highest Embellishments, tho' it is supposed not to be a finish'd Piece; he addresses it to his Friend *Florentinus*, a Person of Learning and Distinction, and confesses it cost him much Pains and Sweat, and that he did not venture upon so arduous a Task, before he had tried the Strength of his Muse upon lower and less important Subjects. The rest of his Poems consist of Panegyricks or Invectives, with some Epistles and Epigrams. Some little Poems upon Sacred Subjects, which through
mistake

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mistake have been ascribed to *Claudian*, and so have made him thought a Christian, were written by *Claudius Mamercus*, a Christian Poet of *Vienne* in *Gaul*. Several Criticks are of opinion that his *Invectives* are the most perfect of all his Writings, and that he has discovered in them all a superiour Talent for *Satire*. Those against *Eutropius* and *Rufinus* have so many Admirers, that it is hard to say, which of the two deserves the Preference.

AFTER the death of *Theodosius*, this *Rufinus*, out of envy to see *Stilico* above him, formed treacherous Designs upon the Empire. He practised secretly with the *Huns*, the *Goths*, and the *Alans*, and endeavour'd to make himself Sovereign, or at least independent upon his Masters and his Enemies. This Treason cost him his Life. The long Prosperity of this great Man, induced *Claudian* to believe, as *Epicurus* did, that all things were made by Chance, and that the Gods did not concern themselves with the Government of the World; but the exemplary Punishment of *Rufinus* removed his Difficulties, and cleared up to him the just Administration of the Divine Providence. His Sentiments upon this Occasion are exact and solemn, and (tho' I am not fond of Quotations, as most who have written in this way) I will venture to represent them in his own Words: I to

Sæpe mihi dubiam traxit sententia mentem,
Curarent Superi terras, an nullus inesset
Rektor, & incerto fuerent mortalia casu.
Nam cum dispositi quæsissem fœdera Mundi,
Præscriptosque maris fines annique mæatus,
Et lucis nostrisque vices, tunc omnia rebar
Consilia

Consilio firmata Dei, qui lege moveri
 Sidera, qui fruges diverso tempore nasci,
 Qui variam Phœben alieno jusserat igne
 Compleri, solemque suo: porrexerit undis
 Littora, tellurem medio libraverit axe.
 Sed cum Res hominum tantâ Caligine volui
 Adspicerem, lætosque diu florere nocentes
 Vexarique pios, rursus labefacta cadebat
 Relligio; causæque viam non sponte sequebar
 Alterius, vacuo quæ currere semina motu
 Affirmat, magnumque novas per inane figuras
 Fortunâ non arte regi, quæ numina sensu
 Ambiguo vel nulla putat, vel nescia nostri.
 Abstulit hunc tandem Rufini Pœna tumultum,
 Absoluitque Deos. Jam non ad culmina rerum
 Injustos crevisse queror, tolluntur in altum
 Ut lapsu graviore ruant.

Oft has my Mind with anxious Doubts been tost,
 Whether the Care of Heaven extends to Earth,
 Or mortal Things depend on Chance alone.
 For when the fair Creation I survey'd,
 In beauteous Order rang'd; the Sea confin'd
 Within its Bounds, and its proud Waves restrain'd;
 The Year revolving in its constant Course,
 And the Vicissitude of Day and Night;
 I clearly saw the Hand of Providence,
 And own'd the sprightly Ruler of the World.
 That God, whose all-informing Hand directs
 The rapid Motion of the whirling Spheres,
 Who rules the Seasons of the varied Year;
 Who fills the Moon's bright Orb with borrow'd Light,
 And bids the Sun with native Lustre shine,
 Who on the Ocean's Brink extends the Shores,
 And on its Axis ballances the Earth.
 But when the gloomy Scene of Man I view'd,
 The

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*The Bad triumphant, and the Good oppress'd;
Religion in a moment lost its bold,
My Heart inclin'd to that Philosophy,
Which tells us, that discordant Seeds of things
Hurl'd thro' the vast Abyss of Emptiness,
Produc'd by Chance, not Art, this fair Variety;
Which wou'd persuade there are no Gods in Heaven,
Or Gods regardless of the human Race.
At length Rufinus' Punishment has clear'd
My anxious Doubtings, and absolv'd the Gods.
No longer I complain, that prosp'rous Vice
Is rais'd on high; the Wicked are exalted
Only to fall with greater Ruin down.*

THE Judges of *Claudian* are divided in their Opinions concerning him; some think his Style too florid, and are offended with the flowing Ease and Harmoniousness of his Numbers, which, they say, want both Variety and Strength to support the Dignity of the Expression. Others admiring the charming Ease and Fluency of his Numbers, with the Spirit and Vivacity of his Style, wish he had been happier, or more judicious in the Choice of his Subjects. *Claudian*, says *Grinitus*, was of an excellent Genius, much adapted to Poetry; he is happy in his Flights, and takes such a wonderful Delight in the Variety of Figures and Sentences, that Nature seems to have design'd him for a Poet. Tho' he did not treat of the noblest Subjects, yet, what was wanting that way, he supply'd with his Wit. He was of a happy Vein, he had a solid Judgment, his Style was pure, easy, and natural; he had a great deal of Smartness without the least Affectation. He is worthy of the highest Commendation, and tho' his Wit and
Eloquence

Eloquence happen'd to fall in a vicious Age, yet since the Reign of *Augustus*, no Man went beyond him, either in Purity of Style, or Loftiness of Expression. The Verses of *Claudian*, says *Borrichius*, are read at this Day with great Veneration, in respect of his profound Wit; his Style is chaste, grave, and sublime, and yet, which is a thing to be admired, easy and natural, interwoven with moral and political Instructions, but he is too full of the Sallies of Youth, and his Style is sometimes a little haughty.

It is observed by *Rapin*, that the common Undertakers in Panegyricks, who have not Force to form handsomely a Design, loose the Reins of their Fancy, and after they have piled a heap of gross and deform'd Praises, without Order and Connexion, one upon another, this, forsooth, must be called a Panegyrick. 'Tis thus, says he, that *Claudian* has praised the Emperor *Honorius*, and the Consuls *Probinus*, *Olyorius*, *Stilico*, and the other illustrious Persons of his Time. Throughout all his Panegyricks reigns an Air of Youthfulness, that has nothing of what is solid, though there appears some Wit. He flags in the Invention, and tho' at his first setting out he seems to be full of Fire and very brisk, yet all of a sudden he stops like a Man out of breath, and his Conclusion is never answerable to his Beginning; yet, says *Gyraldus*, there are some Flowers in him, which, if a wise Man had the gathering of, would be of wonderful advantage.

The End of the First Volume.

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